This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

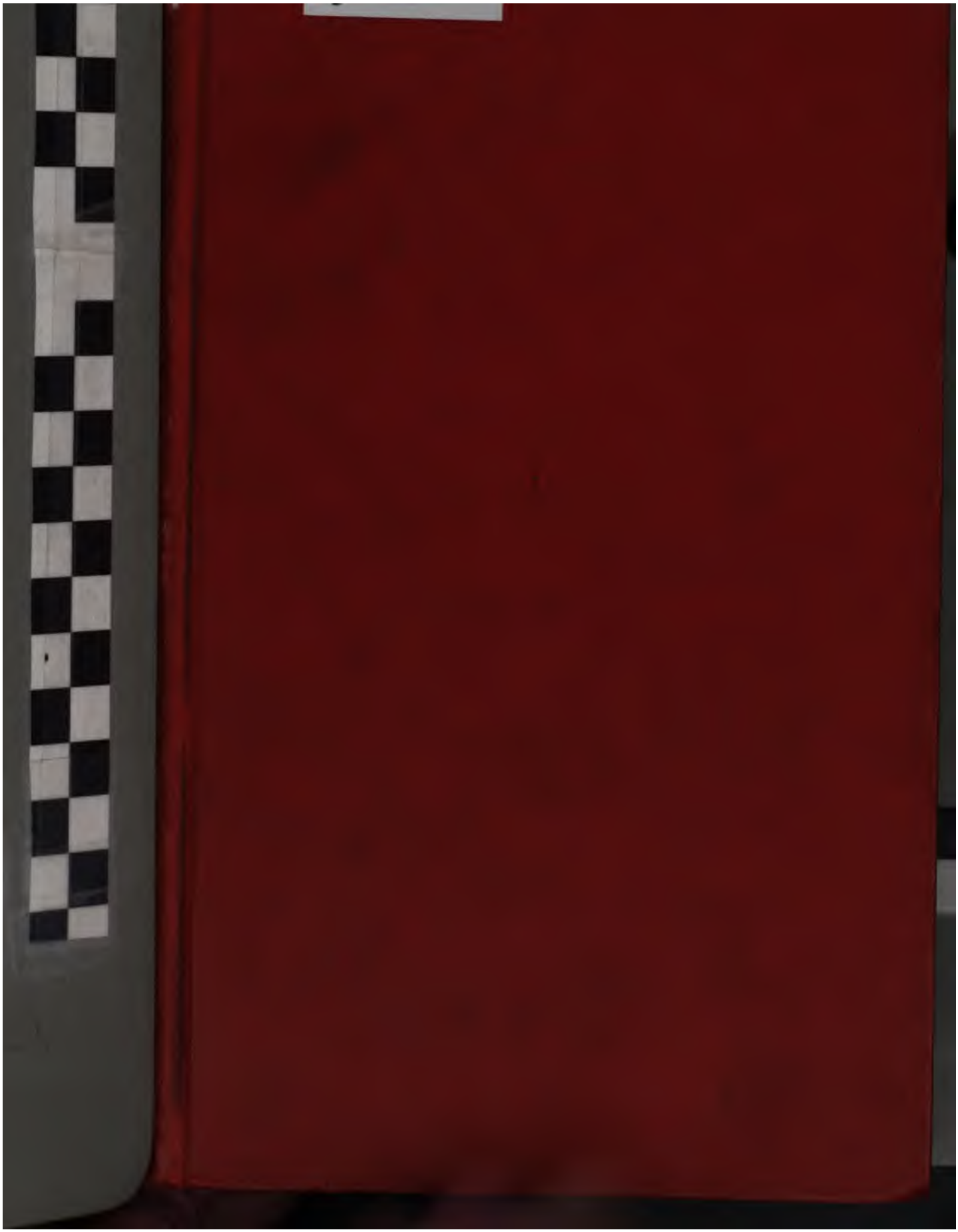
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

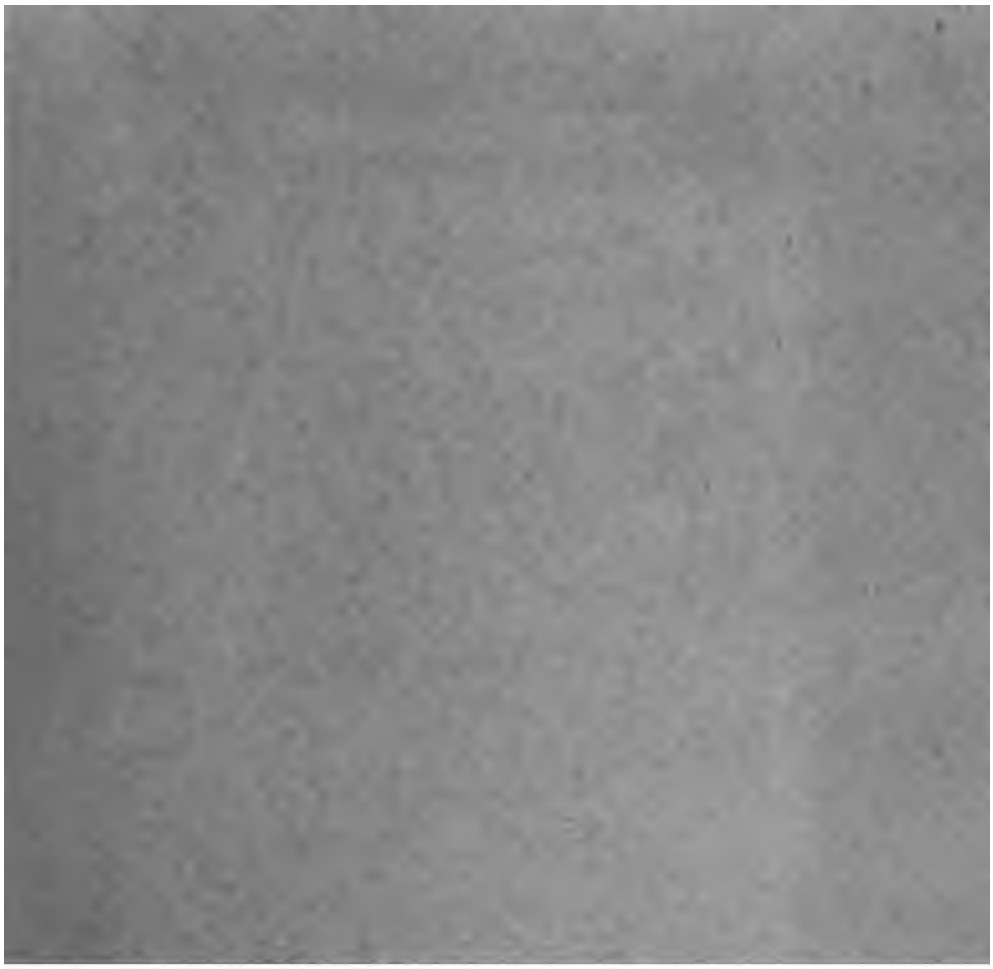
+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`



ANTES
VERITAS
LIBRARY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN



THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

VOL. XI.

THE

WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON;

BEING HIS

CORRESPONDENCE, ADDRESSES, MESSAGES, AND OTHER

PAPERS, OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE,

SELECTED AND PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS;

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By JARED SPARKS.

VOLUME XI.

HARPER & BROTHERS, PUBLISHERS,

82 CLIFF STREET, NEW YORK.

1848.

Entered according to the Act of Congress, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirty-six, by JARED SPARKS, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of the District of Massachusetts.

PART FOURTH;

(CONTINUED);

CONTAINING

CORRESPONDENCE

OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE,

FROM

THE BEGINNING OF HIS PRESIDENCY

TO

THE END OF HIS LIFE.

CORRESPONDENCE

OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE,

WHILE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES AND AFTERWARDS.

TO JOHN ADAMS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Saturday, 27 November, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

I have not been able to give the papers herewith enclosed more than a hasty reading, returning them without delay, that you may offer the perusal of them to whomsoever you shall think proper. The picture, drawn in them, of the Genevese is really interesting and affecting. The proposition of transplanting the members entire of the university of that place to America, with the requisition of means to establish the same, and to be accompanied by a considerable emigration, is important, requiring more consideration than under the circumstances of the moment I am able to bestow upon it.

That a national university in this country is a thing to be desired, has always been my decided opinion; and the appropriation of ground and funds for it in the Federal City has long been contemplated and talked of; but how far matured, or how far the transporting of an entire seminary of foreigners, who may not understand our language, can be assimilated therein, is more than I am prepared to give an opinion

upon; or, indeed, how far funds in either case are attainable.

My opinion, with respect to emigration, is, that except of useful mechanics, and some particular descriptions of men or professions, there is no need of encouragement; while the policy or advantage of its taking place in a body (I mean the settling of them in a body) may be much questioned; for by so doing they retain the language, habits, and principles, good or bad, which they bring with them. Whereas, by an intermixture with our people, they or their descendants get assimilated to our customs, measures, and laws; in a word, soon become one people.

I shall, at any leisure hour after the session is fairly opened, take pleasure in a full and free conversation with you on this subject, being with much esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Philadelphia, 15 December, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

For the reasons mentioned to you the other day, namely, the Virginia Assembly being in session, and a plan being on foot for establishing a seminary of learning upon an extensive scale in the Federal City, it would oblige me if you and Mr. Madison would endeavour to mature the measures, which will be proper for me to pursue,* in order to bring my designs into view as soon as you can make it convenient to yourselves.

* In regard to the disposition of the shares in the Potomac and James River Navigation, which had been given to him by Virginia, and which he proposed to appropriate for purposes of education within the State.

I do not know that the enclosed, or sentiments similar to them, are proper to be engrafted in the communications, which are to be made to the legislature of Virginia or to the gentlemen, who are named as trustees of the seminary, which is proposed to be established in the Federal City; but, as it is an extract of what is contained in my Will on this subject, I send it merely for consideration.*

The shares in the different navigations are to be located and applied in the manner, which has been the subject of conversation. Yours, &c.

---

*This paragraph is explained in the following extract from his Will. After stating the manner in which he became possessed of one hundred shares in the Company established for the purpose of extending the navigation of James River, and of fifty shares in the Potomac Company, (see Vol. IX. pp. 83, 142,) the former valued originally at ten thousand dollars, and the latter at five thousand pounds sterling, he adds;

"I proceed, after this recital, for the more correct understanding of the case, to declare, that, as it has always been a source of serious regret with me to see the youth of these United States sent to foreign countries for the purposes of education, often before their minds were formed, or they had imbibed any adequate ideas of the happiness of their own; contracting, too frequently, not only habits of dissipation and extravagance, but *principles unfriendly to republican government, and to the true and genuine liberties of mankind*, which thereafter are rarely overcome; for these reasons it has been my ardent wish to see a plan devised, on a liberal scale, which would have a tendency to spread systematic ideas through all parts of this rising empire, thereby to do away local attachments and State prejudices, as far as the nature of things would, or indeed ought to admit, from our national councils. Looking anxiously forward to the accomplishment of so desirable an object as this is (in my estimation), my mind has not been able to contemplate any plan more likely to effect the measure, than the establishment of a university in a central part of the United States, to which the youths of fortune and talents from all parts thereof might be sent for the completion of their education in all the branches of polite literature, in the arts and sciences, in acquiring knowledge in the principles of politics and good government; and, as a matter of infinite importance in my judgment, by associating with each other, and forming friendships in juvenile years, be enabled to free themselves in a proper degree from those local prejudices and habitual jealousies, which have just been mentioned, and which, when carried to excess, are never-failing sources

TO JOHN JAY.

Private.

Philadelphia, 18 December, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

Since writing to you by Mr. Bayard about the 1st of November, I have been favored with your letters of the 13th of September,* and 2d of October. As the sentiments contained in the last of those, respecting

---

of disquietude to the public mind, and pregnant with mischievous consequences to this country. Under these impressions, so fully dilated,

"I give and bequeath in perpetuity the fifty shares, which I hold in the Potomac Company (under the aforesaid acts of the legislature of Virginia) towards the endowment of a university to be established within the limits of the District of Columbia, under the auspices of the general government, if that government should incline to extend a fostering hand towards it; and until such seminary is established, and the funds arising on these shares shall be required for its support, my further will and desire is, that the profit accruing therefrom shall, whenever the dividends are made, be laid out in purchasing stock in the bank of Columbia, or some other bank, at the discretion of my executors, or by the treasurer of the United States for the time being, under the direction of Congress, provided that honorable body should patronize the measure; and the dividends proceeding from the purchase of such stock are to be vested in more stock, and so on until a sum adequate to the accomplishment of the object is obtained, of which I have not the smallest doubt before many years pass away, even if no aid or encouragement is given by legislative authority, or from any other source.

"The hundred shares, which I hold in the James River Company, I have given, and now confirm, in perpetuity, to and for the use and benefit of Liberty Hall Academy, in the county of Rockbridge, in the commonwealth of Virginia."

This academy was incorporated in the year 1782. After Washington's intention had been officially communicated, the name was altered to that of *Washington Academy*, as appears by a letter from the trustees to him, dated April 12th, 1798. It retained the same name and rank till 1812, when it was chartered as a college, and called WASHINGTON COLLEGE. For some time the James River stock was unproductive, but in the year 1821 it had so far increased in value, that the annual income from Washington's donation amounted to two thousand four hundred dollars.

* See this letter in the *Life of John Jay*, Vol. I. p. 338.

the communications of Mr. M—— to the National Convention of France, were also transmitted in a private letter from you to the Secretary of State, and replied to, I shall dwell no longer on that subject, than just to observe, first, that, considering the place in which they were delivered, and the neutral policy this country had resolved to pursue, it was a measure that does not appear to have been well digested. Secondly, aware of this himself, and that his conduct would be criticized, he has assigned reasons for its adoption, the sum of which are, that the navy officers and privateersmen of France, who had resorted to our ports, and had been laid under such restrictions as neutral policy required, had represented this country, and not without effect, as unfriendly to the French Revolution. To do away which, he found himself necessitated to counteract them, by strong assurances of the good disposition we bore to the nation. And, thirdly, although I think with you, that he stepped over the line to accomplish it, yet, under the then existing circumstances, the measure was susceptible of two views, one of which, even in the pending state of the negotiation, might not have an unfavorable operation in bringing matters to a happy and speedy result, than which nothing is more desired, or can be more ardently wished for, by the friends of peace and good order in this country.

As the Secretary of State has written to you several times since the receipt of your statement of the negotiation on the 13th of September, I shall add nothing to the observations, which are contained in his letters on the subject thereof.

The business of the session hitherto has been tranquil; and I perceive nothing at this time to make it otherwise, unless the result of the negotiation, which is anxiously expected by all, should produce divisions.

As yet, no details have been handed to Congress. In short, no communication has been made to that body.

A paragraph, of which the enclosed is a copy, is running through all our gazettes, accompanied with a report, that the United States are contemplated as mediator between France and England. To ascertain by what authority the first was inserted, Mr. Bache, in whose paper it first appeared, has been two or three times called upon by the Secretary of State; but no satisfaction has been obtained as yet. With respect to the other, it seems to have originated on the other side of the water, and is of a delicate nature; the very idea of which, under the present successes of the French arms, if the matter was ever contemplated by the other power, would, it is conceived, convey unpleasant sensations, and be considered in an evil light by that nation.

The Virginia escheats of British property do not, as I am informed, stand upon the ground that was related to you; but, as I am not accurately enough read in the law to be precise in my recital of it, I will request the Secretary of State to give you the principles of it. With very great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO TOBIAS LEAR.*

Philadelphia, 21 December, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 17th instant was received yesterday, and I am glad to find, that an act of the Virginia Assembly has been obtained for prolonging the term

* Now in Georgetown, having recently returned from Europe.

for the completion of the inland navigation of the Potomac. The like I hope has been or will be obtained this session in the Assembly of Maryland.

A good opportunity presenting itself on Thursday last, I embraced it to inquire of Mr. Morris if the directors of that company might entertain any hope of deriving aid from Mr. Weston's opinion, respecting the lock-seats at the Great Falls of that river. His answer was; "Mr. Weston, from some peculiar circumstances attending their own concerns, had been prevented from visiting that spot, as was intended; but that he was now expected to be in this city in a few days (as I understood), when he would propose and urge his going thither."

The plan of Mr. Clairborne's engineer, as far as I understand it, is to avoid locks altogether. The vessels are received into a basket, or cradle, and let down by means of a lever and pulleys, and raised again by weight at the hinder extremity of the lever, which works on an axis at the top of a substantial post fixed about the centre of the lever. On this principle, but differently constructed, Mr. Greenleaf a few months ago showed me a model, of the efficacy of which he seemed to entertain the most exalted opinion. My doubts of the utility of both arise, first, from the insufficiency of any machinery of this sort to bear the weight of the cradle, when charged with water and a loaded boat therein, and its aptness to get out of order by means thereof; secondly, I do not find that they are in general use; and thirdly, because, if I recollect rightly, Mr. Weston has told me, but of this I am not certain, that no method of raising and lowering boats had been found equal to that of locks. Still, as I observed in my last, I should be for hearing the opinions and explanations of any and every scientific

and practical character, that could be easily got at, on this subject, and therefore would hear Clairborne's engineer, as well as Mr. Weston; especially as he professes to be particularly well skilled in the application of the principles for propelling boats, in an easy and cheap manner, against the stream, and for conducting water to cities or for any other purpose whatsoever.

The bill you allude to has not passed, nor do I know what shape it will take if it does, and therefore can say nothing more on the subject at this time, than that there will be no precipitancy in engaging either the agents or the means of carrying the law into effect. If the measure, which I have recommended, should be adopted, with the importance of it I am strongly impressed; consequently, if any thing should be required of the President towards carrying it into execution, I shall feel it in a particular manner my duty to set it a going under the most favorable auspices.

I return Dr. Currie's letter, with thanks for the perusal of it. The picture drawn in it of the state of things in his own country, and the details which he gives of those of the belligerent powers, are gloomy for them indeed. All here are well, and all join in best regards for you, with, dear Sir, your affectionate, &c.

TO HENRY KNOX, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 30 December, 1794.

SIR,

The considerations, which you have often suggested to me, and which are repeated in your letter of the 28th instant, as requiring your departure from your present office, are such as to preclude the possibility

of my urging your continuance in it. This being the case, I can only wish that it was otherwise.*

I cannot suffer you, however, to close your public service, without uniting with the satisfaction, which must arise in your own mind from a conscious rectitude, my most perfect persuasion, that you have deserved well of your country.

My personal knowledge of your exertions, whilst it authorizes me to hold this language, justifies the sincere friendship, which I have ever borne for you, and which will accompany you in every situation of life; being, with affectionate regard, always yours, &c.

TO EDMUND PENDLETON.

Philadelphia, 22 January, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

From a long acquaintance with and sincere regard for you, I always feel pleasure in hearing from you

---

* *From General Knox's Letter.* — "Sir; In pursuance of the verbal communications heretofore submitted, it is with the utmost respect, that I beg leave officially to request you will please to consider, that, after the last day of the present month and year, my services as the Secretary for the Department of War will cease. I have endeavoured to place the business of the department in such a train, that my successor may without much difficulty commence the duties of his station. Any explanations or assistance, which he may require, shall be cordially afforded by me.

"After having served my country nearly twenty years, the greatest portion of which under your immediate auspices, it is with extreme reluctance, that I find myself constrained to withdraw from so honorable a station. But the natural and powerful claims of a numerous family will no longer permit me to neglect their essential interests. In whatever situation I shall be, I shall recollect your confidence and kindness with all the fervor and purity of affection, of which a grateful heart is susceptible." — *December 28th.*

Timothy Pickering, at this time Postmaster-General, was appointed to succeed Henry Knox as Secretary of War on the 2d of January, 1795.

and of you. Consequently your letter of the 30th ultimo was an acceptable annuity.*

Notwithstanding you have passed your seventy-third year, whilst you enjoy tolerable health, and retain your faculties in the vigor they are, I wish, as well on public as on private account, that length of days may be added to those which you have already numbered. A month from this day, if I should live to see the completion of it, will place me on the wrong (perhaps it would be better to say on the advanced) side of my grand climacteric; and, although I have no cause to complain

---

* *From Mr. Pendleton's Letter.* — "Lest I should suffer the year to expire, I take up the pen to congratulate you on your safe return from the westward, and on your having, as we hope, quelled the spirit of anarchy and disorder in that quarter, without shedding other blood than what shall be found on a legal trial to have been justly forfeited to the laws, a circumstance which affords considerable consolation under the enormous expense incurred on the occasion, which, though inevitable, is yet grievous in the present situation of America.

"The success of our army under General Wayne is also gratifying, affording a fair prospect of peace in that quarter with the Indians. I fear a radical peace with those to the southward will only be attained by a similar proceeding. Will you permit me, Sir, to suggest a doubt, whether the policy of contracting to pay an annual tribute to neighbouring Indians be sound, and adapted to the genius and temper of that people. It conveys an idea of inferiority, which most nations indeed will take advantage of; but these people, having been in a train of beneficial plunder upon us, will only be restrained by their fear of offending our government, and not by concessions. The old counsellors will profess to be at peace, and continue to receive their annuity, whilst their young men continue their depredations, and the others will say they cannot restrain them. A fair and well-supplied trade with them, a strict adherence to treaties on our part, and a demand of the same on theirs, a fair purchase of their lands when they choose to sell, a prohibition of all speculations upon them, either in trade or buying their lands, and occasional presents in their necessity, which they will consider as a bounty, and not view it in the light of the other, as a stipulated price of peace with them, seem to me the true system.

"I hope we are to continue at peace with the nations of Europe, though they shall be mad enough to continue their war. But if the papers retail the truth, is it not strange that the Bermudian privateers should yet be capturing American vessels?" — *December 30th.*

of the want of health, I can religiously aver, that no man was ever more tired of public life, or more devoutly wished for retirement than I do.

I hope and believe, that the spirit of anarchy in the western counties of this State, to quell which the force of the Union was called for, is entirely subsided; and although, to effect it, the community has been saddled with a considerable expense, yet I trust no money could have been more advantageously expended, both as it respects the internal peace and welfare of this country, and the impression it will make on others. The spirit with which the militia turned out in support of the constitution and the laws of our country, at the same time that it does them immortal honor, is the most conclusive refutation, that could have been given to the assertions of Lord Sheffield,* that, without the protection of Great Britain, we should be unable to govern ourselves, and would soon be involved in confusion. They will see, that republicanism is not the phantom of a deluded imagination. On the contrary, that laws, under no form of government, will be better supported, liberty and property better secured, or happiness be more effectually dispensed to mankind.

The successes of our army to the westward have already been productive of good consequences. They have dispelled a cloud, which lowered very heavily

* In his *Observations on the Commerce of the American States.* This tract was published shortly after the peace at the end of the revolution, and within two years it passed through six editions. Its object was to disparage the importance of the English trade with the United States, and to prevent a commercial treaty. It contained an elaborate array of details respecting the American trade, stated and arranged in such a manner as to give the author's reasoning a plausible aspect, and to produce a considerable influence on the public mind, especially as his views accorded with the prevalent feeling in England. Several pamphlets were written in reply to Lord Sheffield's *Observations.*

in the northern hemisphere (the Six Nations); and, though we have received no direct advices from General Wayne since November, there is reason to believe, that the Indians, with whom we are or were at war in that quarter, together with their abettors, begin to see things in a different point of view. But what effect these favorable changes may have on the southern Indians, it is not easy at this moment to decide.

I accord fully in opinion with yourself, that the plan of annual presents, in an abstract view, unaccompanied with other measures, is not the best mode of treating ignorant savages, from whose hostile conduct we experience much distress; but it is not to be forgotten, that they in turn are not without serious causes of complaint, from the encroachments which are made on their lands by our people, who are not to be restrained by any law now in being, or likely to be enacted. They, poor wretches, have no press through which their grievances are related; and it is well known, that, when one side only of a story is heard and often repeated, the human mind becomes impressed with it insensibly. The annual presents, however, to which you allude, are not given so much with a view to purchase peace, as by way of contribution for injuries not otherwise to be redressed. These people are very much irritated by the continual pressure of land speculators and settlers on one hand, and on the other by the impositions of unauthorized and unprincipled traders, who rob them, in a manner, of their hunting. Nothing but the strong arm of the Union, or, in other words, adequate laws can correct these abuses. But here jealousies and prejudices, from which I apprehend more fatal consequences to this government, than from any other source, aided by local situations, and perhaps by interested considerations, always oppose themselves to efficient measures.

My communications to Congress, at the last and present sessions, have proceeded upon ideas similar to those expressed in your letter, namely, to make fair treaties with the savage tribes, (by this I mean, that they shall perfectly understand every article and clause of them, from correct and repeated interpretations;) that these treaties shall be held sacred, and the infractors on either side punished exemplarily; and to furnish them plentifully with goods, under wholesome regulations, without aiming at higher prices than are adequate to cover the cost and charges. If measures like these were adopted, we might hope to live in peace and amity with these borderers; but not whilst our citizens, in violation of law and justice, are guilty of the offences I have mentioned, and are carrying on unauthorized expeditions against them; and when, for the most atrocious murders, even of those of whom we have the least cause of complaint, a jury on the frontiers can hardly be got to listen to a charge, much less to convict a culprit.

The madness of the European powers, and the calamitous situation into which all of them are thrown by the present ruinous war, ought to be a serious warning to us to avoid a similar catastrophe, so long as we can with honor and justice to our national character. What will be the result of Mr. Jay's mission is more than I am able, at this moment, to disclose. Charged as he has been with all matters in dispute between the two countries, not, as has been insinuated in some of the gazettes, *merely* with that of spoliation, it may easily be conceived, that there would be a large field for discussion. But upon what principle except that of piracy, to account for the conduct of the Bermudian privateers, at this stage of the negotiation, is beyond my comprehension on any fair ground of conjecture, as it must

swell the bill. With very great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE FEDERAL DISTRICT.

Philadelphia, 28 January, 1795.

GENTLEMEN,

A plan for the establishment of a university in the Federal City has frequently been the subject of conversation; but, in what manner it is proposed to commence this important institution, on how extensive a scale, the means by which it is to be effected, how it is to be supported, or what progress is made in it, are matters altogether unknown to me.

It has always been a source of serious reflection and sincere regret with me, that the youth of the United States should be sent to foreign countries for the purpose of education. Although there are doubtless many, under these circumstances, who escape the danger of contracting principles unfavorable to republican government, yet we ought to deprecate the hazard attending ardent and susceptible minds, from being too strongly and too early prepossessed in favor of other political systems, before they are capable of appreciating their own.

For this reason I have greatly wished to see a plan adopted, by which the arts, sciences, and belles-lettres could be taught in their fullest extent, thereby embracing all the advantages of European tuition, with the means of acquiring the liberal knowledge, which is necessary to qualify our citizens for the exigencies of public as well as private life; and (which with me is a consideration of great magnitude) by assembling the youth from the different parts of this rising republic,

contributing from their intercourse and interchange of information to the removal of prejudices, which might perhaps sometimes arise from local circumstances.

The Federal City, from its centrality and the advantages, which in other respects it must have over any other place in the United States, ought to be preferred, as a proper site for such a university. And if a plan can be adopted upon a scale as extensive as I have described, and the execution of it should commence under favorable auspices in a reasonable time, with a fair prospect of success, I will grant in perpetuity fifty shares in the navigation of the Potomac River towards the endowment of it.

What annuity will arise from these fifty shares, when the navigation is in full operation, can at this time be only conjectured; and those, who are acquainted with it, can form as good a judgment as myself.

As the design of this university has assumed no form with which I am acquainted, and as I am equally ignorant who the persons are, who have taken or are disposed to take the maturing of the plan upon themselves, I have been at a loss to whom I should make this communication of my intentions. If the Commissioners of the Federal City have any particular agency in bringing the matter forward, then the information, which I now give to them, is in its proper course. If, on the other hand, they have no more to do in it than others, who may be desirous of seeing so important a measure carried into effect, they will be so good as to excuse my using them as the medium for disclosing these my intentions; because it appears necessary, that the funds for the establishment and support of the institution should be known to the promoters of it; and I see no mode more eligible for announcing my purpose. For these reasons, I give you the trouble of

this address, and the assurance of being, Gentlemen, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 2 February, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

After so long an experience of your public services, I am naturally led, at this moment of your departure from office (which it has always been my wish to prevent), to review them. In every relation, which you have borne to me, I have found that my confidence in your talents, exertions, and integrity has been well placed. I the more freely render this testimony of my approbation, because I speak from opportunities of information, which cannot deceive me, and which furnish satisfactory proof of your title to public regard.*

---

* Mr. Hamilton resigned the office of Secretary of the Treasury on the 31st of January. The following is his answer to the above letter.

"*Philadelphia, February 3d*, 1795. Sir; My particular acknowledgments are due for your very kind letter of yesterday. As often as I may recall the vexations I have endured, your approbation will be a great and precious consolation. It was not without a struggle, that I yielded to the very urgent motives, which impelled me to relinquish a station, in which I could hope to be in any degree instrumental in promoting the success of an administration under your direction; a struggle, which would have been far greater, had I supposed that the prospect of future usefulness was proportioned to the sacrifices to be made.

"Whatever may be my destination hereafter, I entreat you to be persuaded, (not the less for my having been sparing in professions,) that I shall never cease to render a just tribute to those eminent and excellent qualities, which have been already productive of so many blessings to your country; that you will always have my fervent wishes for your public and personal felicity, and that it will be my pride to cultivate a continuance of that esteem, regard, and friendship, of which you do me the honor to assure me. With true respect and affectionate attachment, I have the honor to be, &c."

Oliver Wolcott, Jr., was appointed as successor to Mr. Hamilton on the

My most earnest wishes for your happiness will attend you in your retirement, and you may assure yourself of the sincere esteem, regard, and friendship of, dear Sir, your affectionate, &c.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 16 February, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have duly received your favor of the 4th instant, accompanying the "Transactions of the Society for promoting Agriculture, Arts, and Manufactures," and am very much obliged by your goodness in sending them to me.

Works of this sort are of the most interesting importance to every country; and it is much to be regretted, that similar societies are not more general in our own, or not more attended to in those States where they are established.

I shall, the moment I have a little more leisure than the winding up of the present session of Congress will afford me, read your experiments on lucerne with

---

3d of February. In reply to a notification of his appointment, Mr Wolcott wrote as follows to the President.

"Sir; I have been informed through the Secretary of State, that you have been pleased to appoint me to the office of Secretary of the Treasury of the United States. It is with real diffidence, that I undertake to discharge the duties incident to this appointment; yet, if constant exertions and strict fidelity can compensate for such qualifications as I may not possess, I indulge a hope that my services will receive your approbation.

"But whatever may be the effect of my endeavours, in respect to my own reputation, and the interests confided to my care, I beg leave to assure you, that this distinguished token of confidence will never fail to excite in my breast lively sentiments of respect and gratitude." — *February 4th.*

attention; and I am persuaded I shall do it also with pleasure and edification, as I have long been favorably impressed with the value of that grass; especially, if it can in this country, as in some others, be cultivated in broad-cast, thereby saving the expense of the labor required when it is raised in drills.

I take the liberty of sending for your perusal a pamphlet on the cultivation of potatoes from the shoots. It was sent to me by the author, and must speak for itself, as I have had no experience of the mode therein recommended. I mean, however, to make trial of it the ensuing season; for which reason, after you have read the work, I pray you to return it to me, unless you, or the Society in which you preside, should think it worthy of republication, in which case it may be retained for that purpose. With great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 10 March, 1795.

SIR,

Congress having closed their late session without coming to any specified determination, with respect to the Georgia sale of lands and the application for the extinguishment of the Indian right to those lands, and not having expressed any sentiment respecting the predatory war between the southern Indians and the southern and southwestern frontier of these United States, and the desire of the latter to institute offensive measures, it has become indispensably necessary for the executive to take up the subject upon a full and comprehensive scale, that some systematic plan may be resolved on and steadily pursued during the recess.

To this end, it is my desire, that you will select all the letters of recent date, which have been received from the governors of Georgia and the Southwestern Territory, with their enclosures, as also those which have in like manner been received from the officer commanding the United States troops in the southern quarter, together with the letters of the Indian agent there and Major Freeman; and from a careful perusal of the whole, and as they stand connected with Spanish policy, state the several points on which the decision of the executive is necessary; and let me know the earliest day you can have it ready for presentation, that the heads of departments may be summoned in order to consider the same.

It may not be amiss, at the same time, to examine all the laws relative to this subject, which were passed at the last or at any former session, that no information or explanation of the sense of government on this important matter may be wanting. I am, &c.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Philadelphia, 15 March, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I received your letter of the 23d ultimo; * but not at so early a period as might have been expected from the date of it. My mind has always been more disposed to apply the shares in the inland navigation of the Potomac and James Rivers, which were left to my disposal by the legislature of Virginia, towards the endowment of a university in the United States, than to any other object it had contemplated. In pursuance

* Respecting a plan of several professors of Geneva for migrating to the United States. See Mr. Jefferson's letter in the APPENDIX, No. I

of this idea, and understanding that other means are in embryo for establishing so useful a seminary in the Federal City, I did, on the 28th of January last, announce to the commissioners thereof my intention of vesting in perpetuity the fifty shares I hold under that act in the navigation of the Potomac, as an additional means of carrying the plan into effect, provided it should be adopted upon a scale so liberal as to extend to and embrace a complete system of education.

I had little hesitation in giving the Federal City a preference over all other places for the institution, for the following reasons. First, on account of its being the permanent seat of the government of this Union, and where the laws and policy of it must be better understood than in any local part thereof. Secondly, because of its centrality. Thirdly, because one half (or near it) of the District of Columbia is within the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the whole of the State not inconvenient thereto. Fourthly, because, as a part of the endowment, it would be useful, but alone would be inadequate to the end. Fifthly, because many advantages, I conceive, would result from the jurisdiction, which the general government will have over it, which no other spot would possess. And, lastly, as this seminary is contemplated for the completion of education and study of the sciences, not for boys in their rudiments, it will afford the students an opportunity of attending the debates in Congress, and thereby becoming more liberally and better acquainted with the principles of law and government.

My judgment and my wishes point equally strong to the application of the James River shares to the same subject at the same place; but, considering the source from whence they were derived, I have, in a letter I am writing to the executive of Virginia on this

subject, left the application of them to a seminary within the State, to be located by the legislature.

Hence you will perceive, that I have in a degree anticipated your proposition. I was restrained from going the whole length of the suggestion by the following considerations. First, I did not know to what extent or when any plan would be so matured for the establishment of a university, as would enable any assurances to be given to the application of M. D'Ivernois. Secondly, the propriety of transplanting the professors in a body might be questioned for several reasons; among others, because they might not be all good characters, nor all sufficiently acquainted with our language. And again, having been at variance with the levelling party of their own country, the measure might be considered as an aristocratical movement by more than those, who, without any just cause that I can discover, are continually sounding the bell of aristocracy. And, thirdly, because it might preclude some of the first professors in other countries from a participation, among whom some of the most celebrated characters in Scotland, in this line, might be obtained.

Something, but of what nature I am unable to inform you, has been written by Mr. Adams to M. D'Ivernois. Never having viewed my intended donation as more than a part of the means, that were to set this estab lishment on foot, I did not incline to go too far in the encouragement of professors, before the plan should assume a more formal shape, much less to induce an entire college to migrate. The enclosed is the answer I have received from the commissioners; from which, and the ideas I have here expressed, you will be enabled to decide on the best communication to be made to M. D'Ivernois.

My letter to the commissioners has bound me to the

fulfilment of what is therein engaged; and if the legislature of Virginia, on considering the subject, should view it in the same light as I do, the James River shares will be added thereto; for I think one good institution of this sort is to be preferred to two imperfect ones, which, without other aid than the shares in both navigations, is more likely to fall through, than to succeed upon the plan I contemplate; which is, in a few words, to supersede the necessity of sending the youth of this country abroad for the purpose of education, where too often principles and habits unfriendly to republican government are imbibed, and not easily discarded. Instituting such a one of our own, as will answer the end, and associating them in the same seminary, will contribute to wear off those prejudices and unreasonable jealousies, which prevent or weaken friendships and impair the harmony of the Union. With very great esteem, I am, &c.

P. S. Mr. Adams laid before me the communications of M. D'Ivernois; but I said nothing to him of my intended donation towards the establishment of a university in the Federal District. My wishes would be to fix this on the Virginia side of the Potomac River; but this would not embrace or accord with those other means, which are proposed for the establishment.

TO ROBERT BROOKE, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Philadelphia, 16 March, 1795.

SIR,

Ever since the General Assembly of Virginia were pleased to submit to my disposal fifty shares in the Potomac, and one hundred in the James River Com-

[illegible]

It is with [illegible] regret, that I have seen the youth of the United States migrating to foreign countries, in order to acquire the higher branches of [illegible], and to obtain a knowledge of the sciences. Although it would be injustice to many to pronounce the certainty of their imbibing maxims not congenial with republicanism, it must nevertheless be admitted, that a serious danger is encountered by sending abroad among other political systems those, who have not well learned the value of their own.

The time is therefore come, when a plan of universal education ought to be adopted in the United States. Not only do the exigencies of public and private life demand it, but, if it should ever be apprehended, that prejudice would be entertained in one part of the Union against another, an efficacious remedy will be, to assemble the youth of every part under such circumstances as will, by the freedom of intercourse and collision of sentiment, give to their minds the direction of truth, philanthropy, and mutual conciliation.

It has been represented, that a university corresponding with these ideas is contemplated to be built in the Federal City, and that it will receive considerable endowments. This position is so eligible from its centrality, so convenient to Virginia, by whose legislature the shares were granted and in which part of the Federal District stands, and combines so many other conveniences, that I have determined to vest the Potomac shares in that university.

Presuming it to be more agreeable to the General Assembly of Virginia, that the shares in the James River Company should be reserved for a similar object in some part of that State, I intend to allot them for a

seminary to be erected at such place as they shall deem most proper. I am disposed to believe, that a seminary of learning upon an enlarged plan, but yet not coming up to the full idea of a university, is an institution to be preferred for the position which is to be chosen. The students, who wish to pursue the whole range of science, may pass with advantage from the seminary to the university, and the former by a due relation may be rendered coöperative with the latter.

I cannot however dissemble my opinion, that if all the shares were conferred on a university, it would become far more important, than when they are divided; and I have been constrained from concentring them in the same place, merely by my anxiety to reconcile a particular attention to Virginia with a great good, in which she will abundantly share in common with the rest of the United States.

I must beg the favor of your Excellency to lay this letter before that honorable body, at their next session, in order that I may appropriate the James River shares to the place which they may prefer. They will at the same time again accept my acknowledgments for the opportunity, with which they have favored me, of attempting to supply so important a desideratum in the United States as a university adequate to our necessity, and a preparatory seminary. With great consideration and respect, I am, Sir, &c.*

* This letter was accordingly communicated by the Governor of Virginia to the Assembly at their next session, when the following resolves were passed.

"In the House of Delegates, 1 December, 1795.

"Whereas the migration of American youth to foreign countries, for the completion of their education, exposes them to the danger of imbibing political prejudices disadvantageous to their own republican forms of government, and ought therefore to be rendered unnecessary and avoided;

"Resolved, that the plan contemplated of erecting a university in the

TO MAJOR-GENERAL MORGAN.

Philadelphia, 27 March, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

The interest you have taken in the safety of John Mitchell, as expressed in your letter of the 19th of January last, would be an inducement to me to go as far, in relieving him, as public propriety will admit. But, the attorney-general having made a report, of which the enclosed is a copy, I think it advisable to postpone the further consideration until his trial shall have taken place.

It has afforded me great pleasure to learn, that the general conduct and character of the army have been temperate and indulgent, and that your attention to the quiet and comfort of the western inhabitants has been well received by them. Still it may be proper constantly and strongly to impress upon the army, that they are mere agents of civil power; that, out of camp, they have no other authority than other citizens; that

---

Federal City, where the youth of the several States may be assembled, and their course of education finished, deserves the countenance and support of each State.

"And whereas, when the General Assembly presented sundry shares in the James River and Potomac Companies to George Washington, as a small token of their gratitude for the great, eminent, and unrivalled services he had rendered to this commonwealth, to the United States, and the world at large, in support of the principles of liberty and equal government, it was their wish and desire that he should appropriate them as he might think best; and whereas, the present General Assembly retain the same high sense of his virtues, wisdom, and patriotism;

"Resolved, therefore, that the appropriation by the said George Washington of the aforesaid shares in the Potomac Company to the university, intended to be erected in the Federal City, is made in a manner most worthy of public regard, and of the approbation of this commonwealth.

"Resolved, also, that he be requested to appropriate the aforesaid shares in the James River Company to a seminary at such place in the upper country, as he may deem most convenient to a majority of the inhabitants thereof."

offences against the laws are to be examined, not by a military officer, but by a magistrate; that they are not exempt from arrests and indictments for violations of the laws; that officers ought to be careful not to give orders, which may lead the agents into infractions of law; that no compulsion be used towards the inhabitants in the traffic carried on between them and the army; that disputes be avoided, as much as possible, and be adjusted as quickly as may be, without urging them to an extreme; and that the whole country is not to be considered as within the limits of the camp.

I do not communicate these things to you for any other purpose, than that you may weigh them, and, without referring to any instructions from me, adopt the measures necessary for accomplishing the foregoing objects. With great regard and esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 26 April, 1795.

SIR,

Your letter of the 22d instant, I received yesterday morning.* The request of the Dutch resident is

---

* *From Mr. Randolph's Letter.* — "Notwithstanding Mr. Van Berckel has no right to expect, that I should transmit his letter for your consideration, after what I have written to him; yet I forward it with the view, that, if you should not approve a postponement of the subject, I may receive your instructions. If you do, I shall presume your approbation from silence. In truth, it is advisable to gain as much time as possible. The probability is, that his government is dissolved; that he has dismissed the Dutch consul for being a democrat; that he is desirous of enlisting the executive on his side; that, knowing the jeopardy of his situation, he would be restrained, in what he now does, by no consideration of diplomatic propriety; that he is personally irritated

embarrassing, and means more, I am persuaded, than is expressed. For this reason, I would not only have all further acting upon it suspended, till my return to the seat of government, but it is my desire, moreover, that you and the gentlemen, who are usually consulted on these occasions, would give the subject the most serious consideration, and be prepared to submit your opinions thereon in writing to me upon my arrival.

We have every reason, short of official testimony, to conclude, that the government of the United Netherlands has undergone a revolution; to comply, then, with the request of Mr. Van Berckel might have an unpleasant effect both here and elsewhere; and not to

---

against Heinaken, and that he has been set on by some other foreign *minister* to try the pulse of the President. A compliance with Mr. Van Berckel's request, though seemingly a matter of form, involves numberless delicate and perhaps critical questions. In short, upon examining the consul's commission yesterday, I am not satisfied, that the minister has any authority to remove him." — *Philadelphia, April 22d.*

Substance of a Conversation between Mr. Randolph and Mr. Van Berckel. "When I called upon Mr. Van Berckel on the 20th of April, 1795, in the afternoon, to converse with him on the letter, which I had received from him on that day, dated the 18th, I observed, that I wished to state to him some doubts, which occurred to me on his application. The substance of these was, that, as the commission was the foundation of the *exequatur;* when the former was lawfully withdrawn, the latter ceased of course; and that, as the President could not retain a foreign consul after his commission was abolished, so it did not appear absolutely necessary, that the President should concur in the withdrawing of it. I added, that the practice had never required our government to publish any thing on such an occasion. Mr. Van Berckel thought, that, to prevent mischief, a notification was necessary from the very source, from which the *exequatur* flowed, and that it would be improper for him to correspond with the governors, who had granted it. I promised to inform him the next day of what I meant to do, though my intention then was to submit it wholly to the President for his instruction. I frankly told him, that my own opinion had been against doing what he wished He said something about his power to remove being clear. I replied, that I did not at that time intend to say any thing upon that subject. The truth is, that I wanted nothing more than to understand upon what footing he claimed a publication from government, which was without a precedent with us."

do it, as no change has been announced, in diplomatic form, would, I conceive, be a departure from the usual and established course of proceeding in like cases. In a word, it seems to have placed the executive between Scylla and Charybdis. Much, however, I presume will depend upon the consul's commission, and the specific powers of the resident, if the right of suspension is not clearly established by usage or the law of nations.

From our minister in Holland, or from Mr. Monroe in Paris, we surely may look every moment for official information of the events in that country, the receipt of which might remove the present difficulty.

I am, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, May, 1795.*

SIR,

I have given the correspondence between you and Mr. Van Berckel, respecting the suspension of the Dutch consul Heinaken, and the request to have his *exequatur* withdrawn, due consideration.

The papers are returned with a repetition of my desire, expressed to you yesterday, that the proper authorities may be consulted to know how far the usage and practice of nations give control to ministers in foreign countries over the consuls of their respective nations, particularly of the power of suspending them in the execution of their functions. On this ground, or on specific authority from the government of his nation, the resident must have acted, or he has acted without

* The President returned to Philadelphia from Mount Vernon about the 1st of May.

any. After examining into the first, and then the second, if the first does not support the proceeding, I shall be better prepared to form my opinion of the measure, than I am at present. In the mean time I request, that the attorney-general's opinion may be obtained on the case as stated, laying this letter also before him. I am, &c.

TO JAMES MONROE.

Philadelphia, 5 June, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have to thank you for the information contained in your private letter to me of the 19th of last November.

The regular and detailed accounts, which you receive from the department of state, of occurrences as they arise with us, leave nothing to be added. As a private concern I shall take the liberty of troubling you with the enclosed, requesting that it may be presented or forwarded, as the case may be, to Madame de Lafayette. The papers are under a flying seal, that, seeing the scope and design of them, you may (if the money therein mentioned should not have reached her hands, of which I have received no information,) be enabled to assist her in obtaining it; the favor of doing which I beg you to render us both. My best respects are presented to Mrs. Monroe. With esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

---

* *From Mr. Monroe's Reply.* — "Your favor of the 5th of June did not reach me till a few days past, or it should have been sooner answered. I am happy now to answer it, because I am able to give you details of the lady in question, which will be very agreeable to you. I had advanced her near two thousand dollars, when I was advised here by Jacob Van Staphorst, that you had placed in the hands of his brother for Madame de Lafayette the sum of two thousand three hundred and

TO MADAME DE LAFAYETTE.

Philadelphia, 5 June, 1795.

MADAM,

Neither your situation nor mine will render it advisable for me to add more to the enclosed letter, which was written agreeably to its date, and received by M. Van Staphorst (as will appear by the correspondence between us, which is also enclosed), than to assure you of the sincere pleasure I felt in learning from Mr. Monroe's letters to the Secretary of State, that you were in Paris and at liberty, after a long and painful confinement; particularly as he accompanied it with information, that, in behalf of this country and conformably to the dictates of his own sensibility, he had

---

ten guilders, which had never been received. At this time she was soliciting permission to leave France, with a view of visiting and partaking with her husband the fortune to which he was exposed. I had given her a certificate, that her husband had lands in America, and that Congress had appropriated to his use upwards of twenty thousand dollars, the amount which was due for his services in our revolution, and upon which basis her application was founded and granted. I made known to her the fund you had appropriated for her use, which she readily and with pleasure accepted, and which served to defray the expense of her journey.

"She pursued her route by Dunkirk and Hamburg, to which places I gave and procured letters of recommendation, and at the former of which she was received in the house and entertained by our consul Mr. Coffyn. I assured her, when she left France, there was no service within my power to render her and her husband and family, that I would not with pleasure render them; to count upon my utmost efforts and command them in their favor; that it was your wish and the wish of America that I should do so; to consult her husband as to the mode and means, and apprize me of his opinion thereon. She departed grateful to you and our country, since which I have not heard from her. She had thoughts of visiting in person the Emperor, and endeavouring to obtain the release of her husband; but, whether she did or not, I cannot tell. It was reported some time since, that he was released, and afterwards, that she was admitted with her family into the same state of confinement with him; the latter of which I believe to be true.

"Before she left this place, I became responsible in her favor for nine

aided you with means to supply your present exigencies.

To touch on the case of M. de Lafayette in this letter would be still more delicate, and, under present circumstances, as unavailing as it would be inexpedient. For these reasons I shall only add a renewal of the assurances of the sincerest esteem and regard for you and yours, with which I have the honor to be, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.*

Philadelphia, 29 June, 1795.

SIR,

I enclose to you a copy of the resolution of the Senate, advising that the late treaty with Great Britain be ratified. Upon this resolution two questions arise.

---

thousand livres upon a month's notice (in specie), the object of which was to free a considerable estate from some incumbrances, which was effected upon my surety. As yet I have not been called on to pay it. As soon therefore as I received the draft on Holland for six thousand dollars in her behalf, I wrote to her by two different routes to assure her, that I had funds for hers and her husband's support, upon which she might for the present draw to the amount of five hundred pounds sterling, and afterwards as occasion might require; to which I have received no answer.

"What may be the ultimate disposition of France towards M. de Lafayette it is impossible now to say. His integrity, as far as I can find, remains unimpaired; and, when that is the case, the errors of the head are pardoned, as the passions subside. It is more than probable I may be able to serve him with those by whom he is confined, and that I may do this without injury to the United States here; acting with candor and avowing the motive, since it is impossible that motive can be otherwise than approved, especially if the step be taken when their affairs are in great prosperity. For this, however, I shall be happy to have your approbation, since, if I do any thing with the Emperor, it must be done in your name; if not explicitly, yet in a manner to make known to him the interest you take in the welfare of M. de Lafayette. Young Lafayette is, I presume, now under your auspices."— *Paris, January 3d*, 1796.

* Sent likewise as a circular to the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, and the Attorney-General.

First, is or is not that resolution intended to be the final act of the Senate; or do they expect, that the new article which is proposed shall be submitted to them before the treaty takes effect?

Secondly, does or does not the constitution permit the President to ratify the treaty, without submitting the new article, after it shall be agreed to by the British King, to the Senate for their further advice and consent?

I wish you to consider this subject as soon as possible, and transmit to me your opinion in writing, that I may without delay take some definitive step upon the treaty. I am, &c.*

---

* The proceedings before this date, in regard to the treaty, are briefly and clearly stated by Chief Justice Marshall. His statement will serve to explain several of the subsequent letters. It may be premised, that the treaty was signed by Mr. Jay in London on the 19th of November, 1794; and that it was received by the President in Philadelphia on the 7th of March following.

"On Monday the 8th of June," says Chief Justice Marshall, "the Senate, in conformity with the summons of the President, convened in the Senate-chamber, and the treaty, with the documents connected with it, were submitted to their consideration.

"On the 24th of June, after a minute and laborious investigation, the Senate, by precisely a constitutional majority, advised and consented to its conditional ratification.

"An insuperable objection existed to an article regulating the intercourse with the British West Indies, founded on a fact which is understood to have been unknown to Mr. Jay. The intention of the contracting parties was to admit the direct intercourse between the United States and those Islands, but not to permit the productions of the latter to be carried to Europe in the vessels of the former. To give effect to this intention, the exportation from the United States of those articles, which were the principal productions of the Islands, was to be relinquished. Among these was cotton. This article, which a few years before was scarcely raised in sufficient quantity for domestic consumption, was becoming one of the richest staples of the southern States. The Senate, being informed of this fact, advised and consented that the treaty should be ratified on condition that an article be added thereto, suspending that part of the twelfth article which relates to the intercourse with the West Indies.

"Although, in the mind of the President, several objections to the

TO JOHN RUTLEDGE.

Philadelphia, 1 July, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 18th ultimo, and Mr. Jay's resignation of the office of Chief Justice of the United States, both came to my hands yesterday. The former gave me much pleasure, and without hesitating a moment, after knowing you would accept the latter, 'I

---

treaty had occurred, they were overbalanced by its advantages; and, before transmitting it to the Senate, he had resolved to ratify it, if approved by that body. The resolution of the Senate presented difficulties which required consideration. Whether they could advise and consent to an article, which had not been laid before them; and whether their resolution was to be considered as the final exercise of their power, were questions not entirely free from difficulty. Nor was it absolutely clear that the executive could ratify the treaty, under the advice of the Senate, until the suspending article should be introduced into it. A few days were employed in the removal of these doubts, at the expiration of which, intelligence was received from Europe, which suspended the resolution which the President had formed.

"The English papers contained an account, which, though not official, was deemed worthy of credit, that the order of the 8th of June, 1793, for the seizure of provisions going to French ports, was renewed. In the apprehension, that this order might be construed and intended as a practical construction of that article in the treaty, which seemed to favor the idea, that provisions, though not generally contraband, might occasionally become so, a construction in which he had determined not to acquiesce, the President thought it wise to reconsider his decision. Of the result of this reconsideration there is no conclusive testimony. A strong *memorial* against this objectionable order was directed; and the *propositions* to withhold the ratifications of the treaty until the order should be repealed, to make the exchange of ratifications dependent upon that event, and to adhere to his original purpose of pursuing the advice of the Senate, connecting with that measure the memorial which had been mentioned, as an act explanatory of the sense in which his ratification was made, were severally reviewed by him. In conformity with his practice of withholding his opinion on controverted points, until it should become necessary to decide them, he suspended his determination on these propositions until the memorial should be prepared and laid before him. In the mean time, his private affairs required that he should visit Mount Vernon." — MARSHALL'S *Life of Washington*, 2d edition, Vol. II. p. 361. — See APPENDIX, No. II.

directed the Secretary of State to make you an official offer of this honorable appointment; to express to you my wish, that it may be convenient and agreeable to you to accept it; to intimate, in that case, my desire and the advantages that would attend your being in this city the first Monday in August, at which time the next session of the Supreme Court will commence; and to inform you that your commission as Chief Justice will take date on this day, July the 1st, when Mr. Jay's will cease, but that it would be detained here, to be presented to you on your arrival.

I shall only add, that the Secretary will write to you by post, and by a water conveyance also, if there be any vessel in this harbour, which will sail for Charleston in a few days; and that, with much sensibility for your good wishes, and an assurance of the sincerest esteem and regard, I am, my dear Sir, &c.*

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Baltimore, 18 July, 1795.

SIR,

At this place, and in the moment I was about to step into my carriage, I was overtaken by an express bearing the enclosed despatches.

---

* Mr. Jay arrived in New York from England on the 28th of May. He had been elected Governor of the State of New York during his absence. As he accepted that appointment, he sent to President Washington the following letter, enclosing his resignation of the office of Chief Justice.

"*New York, 29th June*, 1795. — My dear Sir; The enclosed contains my resignation of the office of Chief Justice. I cannot quit it without again expressing to you my acknowledgments for the honor you conferred upon me by that appointment, and for the repeated marks of confidence and attention for which I am indebted to you. It gives me pleasure to recollect and reflect on these circumstances, to indulge the

As the application is of an unusual and disagreeable nature,* and moreover is intended, I have no doubt, to place me in an embarrassed situation, from whence an advantage may be taken, I forward it to you with a request, that you, the other two Secretaries, and the Attorney-General, will give it due consideration; and, if it be proper for me to return an answer, that one may be drawn, which will accord with the ideas of you all, if it can be done, and forwarded to me by post, that I may transmit it from Mount Vernon. In haste,

I am, &c.†

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 22 July, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Both your letters, dated the 17th instant, found me at this place, where I arrived on Monday. The letter from the commissioners to you, I return, as I also do the gazettes of Pittsburg and Boston. The proceedings at the latter place are of a very unpleasant nature. The result I forwarded to you from Baltimore, accompanied with a few hasty lines, written at the moment I was departing from thence; with a request that it might be considered by the confidential officers of government, and returned to me with an answer thereto, if an answer should be deemed advisable.

---

most sincere wishes for your health and happiness, and to assure you of the perfect respect, esteem, and attachment, with which I am, dear Sir, your obliged and affectionate friend and servant."

* The proceedings and resolves of a town meeting in Boston respecting the British treaty.

† The result of the deliberations of the cabinet is contained in the President's reply to the communication from the selectmen of Boston, dated July 28th.

In my hurry, I did not signify the propriety of letting those gentlemen know fully my determination with respect to the ratification of the treaty, and the train it was in; but as this was necessary, in order to enable them to form their opinions on the subject submitted, I take it for granted that both were communicated to them by you as a matter of course. The first, that is, the conditional ratification (if the late order, which we have heard of, respecting provision vessels, is not in operation,) may, on all fit occasions, be spoken of as my determination, unless from any thing you have heard or met with since I left you, it should be thought more advisable to communicate further with me on the subject. My opinion respecting the treaty is the same now that it was, namely, not favorable to it, but that it is better to ratify it in the manner the Senate have advised, and with the reservation already mentioned, than to suffer matters to remain as they are, unsettled. Little has been said to me on the subject of this treaty along the road I passed, and I have seen no one since, from whom I could hear much concerning it; but, from indirect discourses, I find endeavours are not wanting to place it in all the odious points of view, of which it is susceptible, and in some, which it will not admit.

As you have discovered your mistake, with respect to the dates of the French decrees, I shall add nothing on that, nor on any other subject at this time, further than a desire to know if you have heard any thing more from M. Adet on the treaty with Great Britain; and whether Mr. Jaudenes has replied to your letter to him on the score of his inconsistency. I am, &c.*

* A few days previous to the date of the above letter, a conversation had taken place between M. Adet and the Secretary of State, which was reported by the latter to the President as follows.

"M. Adet came to the office and told me, that he had come to

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 24 July, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

My letter from Baltimore, and the one written by Friday's post, dated the 22d instant, render it in a manner unnecessary for me to add more on the score of the treaty with Great Britain, or on the movements which are taking place thereupon in different parts, than to inform you, that, if circumstances should make it more eligible for me to repair to Philadelphia, than for you to come to this place, I can set out as well on a day's as a month's notice for the seat of government;

---

express to me in an amiable manner the uneasiness, which the treaty with Great Britain had excited in him. Professing not to have seen it, I promised him a copy, and that day delivered it to him. He stated some days afterwards in writing three objections. 1. That we had *granted* to Great Britain liberty to seize our naval stores going to France; while France, by her commercial treaty with the United States, could not seize naval stores of the United States going to England. 2. That English privateers may find an asylum in our ports, even during the present war with France. 3. That France could not open a new negotiation with us, as we were prevented from departing, in a new treaty, from this stipulation in favor of British privateers; and France would not give up her prior right.

"In answer to the first objection, I have written to him, that contraband is left unchanged, where it stands by the law of nations; that the working of our treaty with France is reciprocal, inasmuch as if we were at war with England, France would be just where we are now; and that this working of our treaty was plainly foreseen, when it was made. Still I tell him, that, upon the principles of hardship, or injury to a friend, it shall be a subject of our new negotiation; shall not wait for the general treaty; and I doubt not that some modification may be devised.

"In answer to the second, I have written to him, that English privateers will not be admitted into our ports, during this or any other war with France; that our stipulation is exactly the same with that in the treaty of France with England in 1786; that the French treaty is protected from infraction by a positive clause in the treaty with Great Britain, and that it never shall be violated.

"In answer to the third objection, I have written to him, that we would

where, if matters are peculiarly embarrassed, I should be on the theatre of information, with documents and other aids about me, that could not be had here.

I have not, as I mentioned to you in my last, heard much respecting the treaty since I left Philadelphia. At Baltimore I remained no longer than to breakfast. In Georgetown my whole time was spent in business with the commissioners; and in Alexandria I did not stop. Yet the same leaven, that fermented the town of Boston, is at work, I am informed, in other places; but whether it will produce the same fruit remains to be decided.

I shall expect, agreeably to the assurances you have given me, to be well and regularly advised of the *pros* and *cons* in this business, and the preponderancy thereof.

The introduction of A. R. H.* to you was, I con-

---

not ask him to renounce the advantages given to French privateers, in exclusion of the enemies of France; and that the old treaty might be continued in force respecting this particular, so as still to give this right a priority to the like right, stipulated by the treaty with Great Britain.

"In the last paragraph of my letter I desire, that, if any embarrassment still hangs upon these points, he may afford me an opportunity of meeting them, before his communications are despatched to the Committee of Public Safety. While I was transcribing my letter, he came to see me; and I read to him the observations on the last point. He exclaimed that they were very good, very good; and, I inferred, satisfactory. I met him at the President's some time afterwards, and asked him if he had received my letter. He said, 'Yes.' I told him that I hoped I had placed the subject upon a satisfactory footing. He expressed a degree of satisfaction; but not so pointed, as what he had said to me as to the part of the letter relative to the third objection. He added something about his not intending to discuss the law of the 23d of March; but he spoke in so low a voice, that I did not catch his meaning." — *July 14th.*

* The person here alluded to, Mr. Randolph describes as having been convicted of sedition in Ireland, and just arrived in Philadelphia from France. A member of the Senate, Mr. Randolph adds, "brought him to my office to introduce him. This *inaccuracy* of this member of the Senate did not surprise me, nor did it betray me into more than decent

ceive, more the effect of design, than of ignorance or inadvertency. The impropriety of the measure was too palpable, even if instances in abundance had not announced, that characters in the predicament in which that gentleman was could not be noticed by the officers of government without giving umbrage. The conduct of Mr. M. is of a piece with that of the other; and one can scarcely forbear thinking, that these acts are part of a premeditated system to embarrass the executive government. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 27 July, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

On Saturday morning I received your letter of the 21st instant with its enclosures. The post of to-morrow from Alexandria is the first by which I could answer it.

If the meeting of the commissioners appointed to treat with the Onondaga, Cayuga, and Oneida Indians took place at Albany the 15th instant, as was expected, by the extract from General Schuyler's letter to the Governor of New York, any further sentiment now on the unconstitutionality of the measure would be received too late. If it did not take place according to expectation, it is my desire that you would obtain the best advice you can on the case, and do what prudence, with a due regard to the constitution and laws, shall dictate.*

---

civility to a man, who brought a recommendatory letter from Mr. Monroe, dated in April."

* The legislature of New York had authorized the governor to appoint commissioners to treat with those Indians respecting the purchase of their lands. It was a question whether such a negotiation could be legally held without the intervention of the United States. The attorney-

With respect to the meeting, which is proposed to be held with the St. Regis Indians, the proposition of Governor Jay is regular, and I can think of no better character than Colonel Wadsworth, or Mr. Boudinot, to attend it on the part of the United States. If both should decline the service, any other respectable and well-known disinterested character would meet my approbation equally.

The extract from Mr. Higginson's* letter, which you were so obliging as to send to me, places the proceedings of the town of Boston in a different point of view, from what might have been entertained from the resolutions, which were sent to me by express, accompanied with a letter from the selectmen of that place. But, much indeed to be regretted, party disputes are now carried to such a length, and truth is so enveloped in mist and false representation, that it is extremely difficult to know through what channel to seek it. This difficulty to one, who is of no party, and whose sole wish is to pursue with undeviating steps a path, which would lead this country to respectability, wealth, and happiness, is exceedingly to be lamented. But such, for wise purposes it is presumed, is the turbulence of human passions in party disputes, when victory more than *truth* is the palm contended for, that "the post of honor is a *private station.*" With much esteem and regard, I am, &c.

---

general had given an opinion, that such a measure would be unconstitutional.

* Mr. Stephen Higginson of Boston, formerly a member of Congress.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 27 July, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

My letters for the post-office in Alexandria had been sent off some hours before the enclosed despatches were put into my hands by the young gentleman, whose name is mentioned in Governor Clinton's letter to me, which is also forwarded.

Not willing to lose a post-day, I hasten to send these resolutions above alluded to, late as it is, to Alexandria, to go on to-morrow, with a request similar to the one made from Baltimore. A day or two more will, I presume, bring to me the result of the meeting proposed to be held in Philadelphia, which probably will be followed by one from Baltimore and other towns; although I have no advice thereof further than the papers contained, as being in agitation at Baltimore before I left Philadelphia. If one comes from the last mentioned place, and is immediately published, as the others have been, before delivery, let an answer thereto, if answers are advisable, follow it without waiting for my request. I have no time to add more, than that the commercial part of the treaty, as far as my information goes, is generally disliked. I am, &c.

P. S. What says M. Adet upon the subject of the treaty, and the movements thereupon?*

* In reply to this question Mr. Randolph said; "M. Adet has been ill ever since you left this city, so that I have not seen him; nor do I collect any of his opinions. He bolted into objections to the treaty so zealously, and retreated so suddenly, that I cannot help thinking that he conceives he had in a degree committed his government." — *July 31st.*

There had lately been a public meeting in Philadelphia, for the purpose of passing resolves against the treaty. After the business of the meeting was closed, a copy of the treaty was suspended on a pole and carried

TO EZEKIEL PRICE, THOMAS WALLEY, WILLIAM BOARDMAN, EBENEZER SEAVER, THOMAS CRAFTS, THOMAS EDWARDS, WILLIAM LITTLE, WILLIAM SCOLLAY, AND JESSE PUTNAM, SELECTMEN OF THE TOWN OF BOSTON.

United States, 28 July, 1795.

GENTLEMEN,

In every act of my administration, I have sought the happiness of my fellow citizens. My system for the attainment of this object has uniformly been to overlook all personal, local, and partial considerations; to contemplate the United States as one great whole; to confide, that sudden impressions, when erroneous, would yield to candid reflection; and to consult only the substantial and permanent interests of our country.

Nor have I departed from this line of conduct, on the occasion which has produced the resolutions contained in your letter of the 13th instant.

Without a predilection for my own judgment, I have

---

about the streets by a company of people, who at length stopped in front of the British minister's house, and there burnt the treaty, and also before the door of the British consul, amidst the huzzas and acclamations of the multitude. Mr. Hammond, the British minister, complained of this indignity to the Secretary of State. "I have sent this representation," said Mr. Randolph, in the letter to the President above quoted, "for the opinion of the attorney-general. But I am convinced, that neither law nor expediency will support any movement of the government. Indeed, in the conversation which I had with him, he was very calm, and appeared to concur in the impossibility of a public measure in relation to the event." He had written two days previously; "Mr. Hammond yesterday received his letters of recall. He came over to state to me, that he had several things to communicate by order, relative to the treaty, on the supposition of its being ratified, and that he would impart them to me in a few days; as he expects to be ready for his departure in about a fortnight or three weeks. We entered into some conversation on the occurrences at Charleston, upon which he spoke with moderation, and declared that he should represent, when he returned to England, the sincerity of this government in the business of the treaty." — *July 29th.*

weighed with attention every argument, which has at any time been brought into view. But the constitution is the guide, which I never can abandon. It has assigned to the President the power of making treaties, with the advice and consent of the Senate. It was doubtless supposed that these two branches of government would combine, without passion, and with the best means of information, those facts and principles upon which the success of our foreign relations will always depend; that they ought not to substitute for their own conviction the opinions of others, or to seek truth through any channel but that of a temperate and well-informed investigation.

Under this persuasion, I have resolved on the manner of executing the duty before me. To the high responsibility attached to it, I freely submit; and you, Gentlemen, are at liberty to make these sentiments known as the grounds of my procedure. While I feel the most lively gratitude for the many instances of approbation from my country, I can no otherwise deserve it, than by obeying the dictates of my conscience. With due respect, I am, Gentlemen, &c.*

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 29 July, 1795.

SIR,

The contents of your letters of the 21st and 24th instant, which I received by Monday's post, the importance of some of their enclosures, and the perturbed

* The same letter, in substance, was sent in reply to several addresses similar to that from the selectmen of Boston. The President regarded it as containing the principles upon which he acted in giving his assent to the treaty.

state of men's minds respecting the late treaty with Great Britain, together with the proceedings in some of the principal towns to embarrass the business, have determined me to repair to the seat of government, if I hear nothing from you between this and Monday next to render it unnecessary. Two reasons delay my setting out previous to that day. The first is, the uncertainty I shall be in, until I hear from you subsequently to your receipt of my letter of the 24th instant, whether you may not be on the road yourself. The second, because a general meeting of the Potomac Company, on important business, is to be held in Alexandria on Monday next, at which I am much pressed to be.

The proclamation * is herewith enclosed. Along with it you will perceive the resolutions of the town of Portsmouth in New Hampshire, similar to those of Boston and New York; and the counter proceedings of the Chamber of Commerce in the last mentioned place, to those which I forwarded to you by the mail of Tuesday. I also return, under cover of this letter, the draft of the *Memorial* and the rough draft of a *Ratification*. These are very important papers, and, with the instructions which follow, will require great attention and consideration, and are the primary cause of my returning to Philadelphia. Mr. Jaudenes will, in spite of himself, be arrogant and inconsistent. Perhaps a closing letter to him on the subject of negotiation may not be amiss. Mr. Monroe's letter and the enclosures are among the papers which I send you. With esteem, &c.†

---

* Granting pardon to certain persons engaged the year before in the western insurrection. This proclamation was dated July 10th, but was not published till the 6th of August.

† *Extracts from Mr. Randolph's Letters.* — "The whole subject is daily increasing in magnitude. The proceedings in Boston, which as

P. S. M. Adet's answer is such a one as I expected. Do with the French letter herewith enclosed whatsoever is proper.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 29 July, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your private letters of the 24th and 25th instant have been received, and you will learn by the official

---

yet we guess at only, but which have passed, as it is said, to Mount Vernon by express, are very pregnant in their consequences. A like effort was to have been made on Saturday at New York; and the example will certainly, I believe, catch in this city. I conjecture, that you will wish to see the full upshot of all these measures, before you take your final act; although the degree of attention to them may be questionable. The rough draft of the memorial and a paper to accompany it are finished; but I mean to conclude the instructions for the farther negotiation before I transcribe them, that I may have an entire view of the matter all at once. It grows more and more delicate and critical, and it looks at present as if, after it is somewhat more developed, I should run down for a day to Mount Vernon. I think a personal conference will be necessary in the progress of the affair, and my going to Virginia will be a thing of no notice. In fact, so much is at stake, that no pains, labor, vigilance, circumspection, or thought can be excessive. You may be assured, that I will collect every particle of information on all sides; and, estimating this subject as the greatest in its consequences, which has occurred under this government, I shall understand well how it will operate all round." — *Philadelphia, July 20th.*

"I hinted in a past letter, that there was something mysterious in one part of the business. What I allude to is, that the advice given to you from New York, as to the withholding of a ratification until the order for seizing provisions was rescinded, does not appear to have been circulated among the particular friends of the gentlemen, from whom the advice came. Permit me, Sir, to suggest the propriety of knowing how far the same views have been taken by others." — *July 24th.*

"I have the honor of enclosing to you a draft, by the three other gentlemen. They had prepared drafts, which did not accord with my views, and therefore I was not deterred by any danger of giving offence

letter of this date my determination of returning to Philadelphia after Monday, if nothing in the interim casts up to render it unnecessary.

I am excited to this resolution by the violent and extraordinary proceedings, which have and are about taking place in the northern parts of the Union, and may be expected in the southern; because I think that

---

from offering that, which they have subscribed. I think it best, however, to send to you all the drafts; for it is a very difficult and critical subject to write upon. Indeed, Sir, I must own, that even that which has been approved cannot be rendered as perfect as it may be, without knowing how far you mean to go. I take the liberty of saying, that it would be better to have a little more delay in returning the answer, than to usher into the world a composition of this kind, without its being satisfactory to you in every letter. The gentlemen wished me to go down with it. I informed them, that I should hear from you on Tuesday, in regard to the idea which I mentioned to you on this subject. The post brought me about an hour ago the letter, which you did me the honor of writing from Mount Vernon on the 22d instant. I had communicated to the gentlemen fully your determination with respect to the ratification. I have no doubt, that the order for seizing provision-vessels exists. Nothing has occurred to prevent the speaking of that determination. But, as the final meeting here is to be this afternoon, it will not be spoken of immediately, lest it should be supposed, that we wish to thwart their proceedings." — *July 25th.*

"As soon as I had the honor of receiving your letter of the 24th instant, I conferred with the Secretaries of the Treasury and of War upon the necessity or expediency of your return hither at this time. We all concurred, that neither the one nor the other existed; and that the circumstance would confer upon the things, which have been and are still carried on, an importance, which it would not be convenient to give them." — *July 29th.*

"Mr. Wolcott, Colonel Pickering, and myself agree in the draft of an answer now enclosed. The first gentleman, however, doubted the propriety of answering all addresses. We thought, that a distinction between them was impracticable. Mr. Bradford could not be consulted, not being to be found." — *July 31st.*

The draft mentioned in this last paragraph was that of an answer to be returned to the selectmen of Boston. But the President had already decided upon that letter, it having been signed by him at Mount Vernon on the 28th of July. He had probably gathered the opinions of the different members of the cabinet from the drafts, which Mr. Randolph had forwarded to him on the 25th.

the Memorial, the Ratification, and the Instructions, which are framing, are of such vast magnitude as not only to require great individual consideration, but a solemn conjunct revision. The latter could not take place if you were to come here; nor would there be that source of information, which is to be found at, and is continually flowing to, the seat of government; and besides, in the course of deliberation on these great objects, the examination of official papers may more than probably be found essential, which could be resorted to at no other place than Philadelphia.

To leave home so soon will be inconvenient. A month hence it would have been otherwise; and it was, as I hinted to you before I left the city, in contemplation by me for the purpose of Mrs. Washington's remaining here till November, when I intended to come back for her. But whilst I am in office, I shall never suffer private convenience to interfere with what I conceive to be my official duty.

I view the opposition, which the treaty is receiving from the meetings in different parts of the Union, in a very serious light; not because there is more weight in any of the objections, which are made to it, than was foreseen at first, for there is none in some of them, and gross misrepresentations in others; nor as it respects myself personally, for this shall have no influence on my conduct, plainly perceiving, and I am accordingly preparing my mind for it, the obloquy which disappointment and malice are collecting to heap upon me. But I am alarmed at the effect it may have on, and the advantage the French government may be disposed to make of, the spirit which is at work to cherish a belief in them, that the treaty is calculated to favor Great Britain at their expense. Whether they believe or disbelieve these tales, the effect it will have upon

the nation will be nearly the same; for, whilst they are at war with that power, or so long as the animosity between the two nations exists, it will, no matter at whose expense, be their policy, and it is to be feared will be their conduct, to prevent us from being on good terms with Great Britain, or her from deriving any advantages from our trade, which they can hinder, however much we may be benefited thereby ourselves. To what length this policy and interest may carry them is problematical; but, when they see the people of this country divided, and such a violent opposition given to the measures of their own government pretendedly in their favor, it may be extremely embarrassing, to say no more of it.

To sum the whole up in a few words, I have never, since I have been in the administration of the government, seen a crisis, which in my judgment has been so pregnant with interesting events, nor one from which more is to be apprehended, whether viewed on one side or the other. From New York there is, and I am told will further be, a counter current; but how formidable it may appear, I know not. If the same does not take place at Boston and other towns, it will afford but too strong evidence, that the opposition is in a manner universal, and would make the ratification a very serious business indeed. But, as it respects the French, even counter resolutions would, for the reasons I have already mentioned, do little more than weaken, in a small degree, the effect the other side would have.

I have written and do now enclose the letter, the draft of which was approved by the heads of departments, to the selectmen of the town of Boston; but if new lights have been had upon the subject, since it was agreed to, or if upon reconsideration any alteration should be deemed necessary, I request you to

detain it until I see you. Let me also request, that the same attention may be given to the draft of a letter to Portsmouth, and the Chamber of Commerce at New York, as was recommended on that occasion. I am, &c.

P. S. I add to the paper sent, Chancellor Livingston's letter,* and wish, if it is best to give it an answer, that one may be prepared. Although this letter is a hurried as well as a private one, I have no objection to the confidential officers seeing it, and wish them to prepare their minds on the several subjects mentioned therein by the time I arrive.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 31 July, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

On Wednesday evening I sent the packet, now under cover with this, to the post-office in Alexandria, to be forwarded next morning at the usual hour, four o'clock, by the Baltimore mail. But, behold! when my letter-bag was brought back from the office and emptied, I not only got those which were addressed to me, among which yours of the 27th was one, but those also which I had sent up the evening before.

I have to regret this blunder of the postmaster, on account of the enclosures, some of which I wished to have got to your hands without delay, that they might have undergone the consideration and acting upon, which were suggested in the letter accompanying them.

---

* Expressing disapprobation of the treaty. See the answer, dated August 20th.

On another account I am not sorry for the return of the packet, as I resolved thereupon, and on reading some letters, which I received at the same time, to wait your acknowledgment of the receipt of my letter of the 24th instant, before I would set out; as I should thereby be placed on a certainty whether your journey hither, or mine to Philadelphia, would under all circumstances be deemed most eligible; or whether the business could not be equally well done without either; repeating now, what I did in my letter of the 24th, that I do not require more than a day's notice to repair to the seat of government, and that, if you and the confidential officers with you are not clear in the measures, which are best to be pursued in the several matters mentioned in my last, my own opinion is, and for the reasons there given, that difficult and intricate or delicate questions had better be settled there, where the streams of information are continually flowing in, and that I would set out accordingly.

To be wise and temperate, as well as firm, the present crisis most eminently calls for. There is too much reason to believe, from the pains which have been taken before, at, and since the advice of the Senate respecting the treaty, that the prejudices against it are more extensive than is generally imagined. This I have lately understood to be the case in this quarter, from men, who are of no party, but well-disposed to the present administration. How should it be otherwise, when no stone has been left unturned, that could impress on the minds of the people the most arrant misrepresentation of facts; that their rights have not only been *neglected*, but absolutely *sold;* that there are no reciprocal advantages in the treaty; that the benefits are all on the side of Great Britain; and, what seems to have had more weight with them than all the rest,

and to have been most pressed, that the treaty is made with the design to oppress the French, in open violation of our treaty with that nation, and contrary, too, to every principle of gratitude and sound policy? In time, when passion shall have yielded to sober reason, the current may possibly turn; but, in the mean while, this government in relation to France and England may be compared to a ship between the rocks of Scylla and Charybdis. If the treaty is ratified, the partisans of the French, or rather of war and confusion, will excite them to hostile measures, or at least to unfriendly sentiments; if it is not, there is no foreseeing all the consequences, which may follow, as it respects Great Britain.

It is not to be inferred from hence, that I am disposed to quit the ground I have taken, unless circumstances more imperious than have yet come to my knowledge should compel it; for there is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth and pursue it steadily. But these things are mentioned to show, that a close investigation of the subject is more than ever necessary, and that they are strong evidences of the necessity of the most circumspect conduct in carrying the determination of government into effect, with prudence as it respects our own people, and with every exertion to produce a change for the better from Great Britain.

The memorial seems well designed to answer the end proposed; and by the time it is revised and new dressed, you will probably (either in the resolutions, which are or will be handed to me, or in the newspaper publications, which you promised to be attentive to,) have seen all the objections against the treaty, which have any real force in them, and which may be fit subjects for representation in the memorial, or in the instructions, or both. But how much longer the presentation of the memorial can be delayed without

exciting unpleasant sensations here, or involving serious evils elsewhere, you, who are at the scene of information and action, can decide better than I. In a matter, however, so interesting and pregnant with consequences as this treaty, there ought to be no precipitation; but, on the contrary, every step should be explored before it is taken, and every word weighed before it is uttered or delivered in writing.

The form of the ratification requires more diplomatic experience and legal knowledge than I possess, or have the means of acquiring at this place, and therefore I shall say nothing about it. I am, &c.*

* M. Fauchet's celebrated letter, which had been intercepted by an English vessel in crossing the Atlantic, and transmitted to Lord Grenville in London, reached the hands of Mr. Hammond, the British minister in Philadelphia, and was given by him to Mr. Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury, on the 28th of July. He immediately showed it to Mr. Pickering. In this letter the conduct and character of their colleague, the Secretary of State, were seriously implicated. It was their opinion, that its contents were of so delicate and important a nature, that they ought to be imparted to the President without delay, and with the utmost secrecy. Any open attempt to effect this end, they thought might excite the suspicion of Mr. Randolph. The first hint of the matter was communicated to the President in a letter from Mr. Pickering as follows.

"*July 31st.* — On the subject of the treaty I confess I feel extreme solicitude, and, for a *special reason*, which can be communicated to you only in person. I entreat, therefore, that you will return with all convenient speed to the seat of government. In the mean time, for the reason above referred to, I pray you to decide on no important political measure, in whatever form it may be presented to you. Mr. Wolcott and I (Mr. Bradford concurring) waited on Mr. Randolph, and urged his writing to request your return. He wrote in our presence, but we concluded a letter from one of us also expedient.

"With the utmost sincerity I subscribe myself yours, and my country's friend.

"This letter is for your own eye alone."

After receiving these hints, the President hastened from Mount Vernon to Philadelphia, where he arrived on the 11th of August, and the contents of Fauchet's intercepted letter were made known to him the same day.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 3 August, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

No mail at two o'clock yesterday had been received in Alexandria from Philadelphia since the 29th ultimo. I am sending up this afternoon to see if the expected mail of this day is in; although I have little hope of it, as the violence and continuance of the rains since Thursday last have been such, as to sweep every thing before them, and to do great damage to the gathered and growing grain, as well as other things. Of course, by swelling the waters and carrying away bridges, the intercourse between one place and another, where these were, has been entirely cut off. This circumstance, added to the inexcusable blunder of the postmaster in Alexandria, will prevent my despatches, which ought to have been in Philadelphia on Saturday last, from getting to your hands until Thursday next at soonest.

To these impediments is to be attributed, I presume, the non-reception of the Baltimore resolutions, for resolutions I am told have been passed at that place. And the like may be expected from Richmond, a meeting having been had there also, at which Mr. Wythe, it is said, was seated as moderator; by chance more than design, it is added. A queer chance this for the chancellor of a State.

All these things do not shake my determination with respect to the proposed ratification, nor will they, unless something more imperious and unknown to me should, in the judgment of yourself and the gentlemen with you, make it advisable for me to pause. But let me again repeat my desire, that, as fast as resolutions or addresses (call them what you will) of this kind appear in the papers *pro* or *con*, answers if thought

advisable may be drafted and sent to me, approved by all of you, without waiting for individual applications on each one separately; for this would occasion a considerable lapse of time, in the first place; and, in the second, I should be spared from some writing on this subject, which is an object, as I have no aid, Mr. Dandridge being with his friends in New Kent.

I am, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 4 August, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

The messenger, who was sent yesterday afternoon to the post-office in Alexandria, returned without letters, the mails not being arrived. Some hours after my messenger was despatched for Alexandria, the Richmond production was delivered to me by the express sent for that purpose. They have outdone all that has gone before them; but, according to the account given by the express, the meeting was not numerous, and some of the principal characters not in town. I send the proceedings to Alexandria to-day, to go on by the first mail, to be acted upon as mentioned in former letters. I am, &c.*

---

* This was the last letter written by the President to Mr. Randolph before his return to Philadelphia. On the 19th of August, having fully weighed the contents of Fauchet's intercepted letter, he handed the original to Mr. Randolph in the presence of the other secretaries, and demanded an explanation of the parts, which related to his intercourse with that minister. After reading the letter, and conversing for some time on the subject of it with the President, he expressed a wish to examine it more at leisure before he made further remarks; but said, that, considering the treatment he had received in this instance, he could not hold his office a moment longer. He resigned the same day. See his letter of resignation in the APPENDIX, No. III.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

Philadelphia, 20 August, 1795.

SIR,

Your resignation of the office of State is received. Candor induces me to give you in a few words the following narrative of facts.

The letter from M. Fauchet, with the contents of which you were made acquainted yesterday, was, as you supposed, an intercepted one. It was sent by Lord Grenville to Mr. Hammond, by him put into the hands of the Secretary of the Treasury, by him shown to the Secretary of War and the Attorney-General; and a translation thereof was made by the former for me.

At the time Mr. Hammond delivered the letter, he requested of Mr. Wolcott an attested copy, which was accordingly made by Mr. Thornton, his late secretary, and which is understood to remain at present with Mr. Bond. Whether it is known to others I am unable to decide. Whilst you are in pursuit of means to remove the strong suspicions arising from this letter, no disclosure of its contents will be made by me; and I will enjoin the same on the public officers, who are acquainted with the purport of it, unless something shall appear to render an explanation necessary on the part of the government, and of which I will be the judge.

A copy of M. Fauchet's letter shall be sent to you. No. 6, referred to therein, I have never seen.

I am, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Philadelphia, 20 August, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your favor of the 10th instant with its enclosures. They contain a great deal of interesting matter, and No. 9 discloses much important information and political foresight. For this proof of your kindness and confidence, I pray you to accept my best and most cordial thanks.

Mr. John Adams,* your son, must not think of retiring from the walk he is now in. His prospects, if he pursues it, are fair; and I shall be much mistaken if, in as short a time as can well be expected, he is not found at the head of the diplomatic corps, let the government be administered by whomsoever the people may choose.

The embarrassment into which he was thrown by the unforeseen events, which so soon took place in Holland after he had received his first instructions and had arrived in that country, have long since been removed, and he can be at no loss now as to the course to pursue.

Long before this letter can have reached you, my answer to the Boston resolutions will, I presume, have been published in the gazettes of that place, notwithstanding the delays it met with in getting thither; first, from a mistake of the postmaster in Alexandria, who, mixing it with the despatches that were addressed to me, returned it by the messenger, who carried my letters to his office, which necessarily detained it three days; and the immense falls of rain and destruction

* John Quincy Adams, then minister from the United States in Holland.

of bridges, which followed, and prevented all travelling for at least three days more.

Whether it was from the spark, which kindled the fire in Boston, that the flames have spread so extensively, or whether the torch by a preconcerted plan was lit ready for the explosion in all parts, so soon as the advice to ratify the treaty should be announced, remains to be developed; but, as the ratification thereof, agreeably to the advice of the Senate, has passed from me, the meetings in opposition to the constituted authorities are as useless at all times, as they are improper and dangerous.* My best respects to Mrs. Adams, and, with sincere regard, I am, &c.

TO ROBERT R. LIVINGSTON.

Philadelphia, 20 August, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I received your favor dated the 8th of July, on the subject of the treaty with Great Britain, the day preceding my departure from Mount Vernon, from whence I intended to have acknowledged the receipt of it; but the many letters of a public nature poured upon

* The ratification of the treaty was signed by the President on the 18th of August. The question was brought before the cabinet the day after his arrival in Philadelphia, and discussed anew. "The Secretary of State maintained singly the opinion, that, during the existence of the provision order, and during the war between England and France, this step ought not to be taken. This opinion did not prevail. The resolution was adopted to ratify the treaty immediately, and to accompany the ratification with a strong memorial against the provision order, which should convey in explicit terms the sense of the American government on that subject. By this course the views of the executive were happily accomplished. The order was revoked, and the ratifications of the treaty were happily exchanged." — MARSHALL'S *Life of Washington*, 2d edit. Vol. II. p. 368.

me at that place, and the urgency of the business in which I have since been engaged, have prevented my doing it till now.

Aiming only to promote and secure the true interests of my country, I willingly receive information concerning those interests from my fellow-citizens. The opinions and reasonings of enlightened men are particularly acceptable; but, as it happens in other matters, so in this, they are extremely variant. You deem the treaty palpably defective and pregnant with evils; others think it contains substantial good. For myself, I freely own, that I cannot discern in it the mischiefs you anticipate. On the contrary, although it does not rise to all our wishes, yet it appears to me calculated to procure to the United States such advantages, as entitle it to our acceptance. My final act of course conforms to this opinion.

I feel myself greatly obliged by your expressions of respect, esteem, and attachment, and, if the unvarying integrity of my views have deserved them, they will not now be withdrawn; for I can merit your good opinion, and the general approbation of my fellow-citizens, only by a conscientious discharge of what I conceive to be my duty. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JAMES ROSS.

Philadelphia, 22 August, 1795.

Dear Sir,

I have been favored with your letter of the 3d instant. I am perfectly satisfied with all your transactions with Colonel Shreve, and will ratify them whenever the papers shall be produced.

The seaport towns, or rather parts of them, are

involved, and are endeavouring as much as in them lies to involve the community at large, in a violent opposition to the treaty with Great Britain, which is ratified as far as the measure depends upon me. The general opinion, however, as far as I am able to come at it is, that the current is turning.

The consequences of such proceedings are more easily foreseen than prevented, if no act of the constituted authorities is suffered to go into execution unaccompanied with the poison of malignant opposition. If one could believe that the meetings, which have taken place, spoke the general sense of the people on the measure they condemned, it might with truth be pronounced, that it is as difficult to bear prosperity as adversity, and that no situation or condition in life can make them happy. But, being hurried, I shall not dwell on this subject, and only add, that with much truth I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO THOMAS JOHNSON.

Private.

Philadelphia, 24 August, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

The office of Secretary of State is vacant, occasioned by the resignation of Mr. Randolph. Will you accept it? You know my wishes of old to bring you into the administration. Where then is the necessity of repeating them? No time more than the present ever required the aid of your abilities, nor of the old and proved talents of the country. To have yours would be pleasing to me, and I verily believe would be agreeable also to the community at large. It is with you to decide. If in the affirmative, return to me the

enclosed letter, and I will communicate further with you on this subject the moment you inform me thereof. If it is in the negative, be so good as to forward the letter by the post agreeably to its address. And at any rate write to me the result of your determination, as soon as you can after the receipt of this letter, as I only remain here to get this and some other matters arranged, before I go to Virginia for my family.

With sincere esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Private.

Philadelphia, 24 August, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

The office of Secretary of State has become vacant by the resignation of Mr. Randolph. Is the period yet arrived when the situation of your private concerns would permit you to accept it? As a preliminary means of information, I have resorted to your letter of the 24th of February, 1794; and, though the time then allotted for arranging them is not quite accom-

---

* *From Mr. Johnson's Answer.* — "I feel real concern, that my circumstances will not permit me to fill the important office you propose to me. I am far from being out of humor with the world on my own account. It has done me more than justice in estimating my abilities, and more justice than common in conjecturing my motives. I feel nothing of fear, either in hazarding again the little reputation I may have acquired, for I am not conscious of having sought or despised applause; but, without affectation, I do not think I could do credit to the office of Secretary. I cannot persuade myself, that I possess the necessary qualifications for it, and I am sure I am too old to expect improvement. My strength declines, and so too probably will my mental powers soon. My views in this world have been some time bounded chiefly to my children. They yet for a little while may have me to lean on. Being constantly with them adds to their happiness, and makes my chief comfort. I send your letter to General Pinckney to the post-office with this, as you eventually desired." — *August 29th.*

plished, there is not much wanting of it. And I have heard, besides, that you were in a manner retiring from the pursuits of your profession.

It is unnecessary for me to repeat sentiments, which you have so often heard me express, respecting my wishes to see you in the administration of the general government; of the sincerity of which you can have no doubt. Equally unnecessary is it for me to observe to you, that the affairs of this country are in a violent paroxysm, and that it is the duty of its old and uniform friends to assist in piloting the vessel in which we are all embarked between the rocks of Scylla and Charybdis; for more pains never were taken, I believe, than at this moment, to throw it upon one or the other, and to embroil us in the disputes of Europe.

I shall add nothing further, however, on this subject; for nothing, I am certain, I could say, would be new to a person of your observation and information. I will come, therefore, to the point at once. Can you, or can you not, make it comport with your convenience and inclination to accept the appointment of Secretary of State? If you answer in the affirmative, it will occur to you instantly, that an office of such dignity and high importance ought not to be a moment without a head at such a crisis as this, if it could well be avoided. If (which I should sincerely regret) your answer should be in the negative, the less there is said of the offer the better, for reasons which will readily occur to you. In either case, be so good as to favor me with an answer as soon as your mind is made up relative thereto. With very sincere esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

* After a brief statement of his private affairs, Mr. Pinckney added in reply;

"Under these circumstances it is not in my power to accept the

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Private.

Philadelphia, 26 August, 1795.

Dear Sir,

The office of Attorney-General of the United States has become vacant by the death of Mr. Bradford. I take the earliest opportunity of asking if you will accept the appointment? The salary annexed thereto, and the prospect of a lucrative practice in this city, the present seat of the general government, must be as well known to you, better perhaps, than they are to me, and therefore I shall say nothing concerning them.

If your answer is in the affirmative, it will readily occur to you, that no unnecessary time should be lost in repairing to this place. If, on the contrary, it should be in the negative, which I should be very sorry for, it might be as well to say nothing of this offer. But in either case I pray you to give me an answer as promptly as you can.

With esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

---

elevated station, in which you have so obligingly offered to place me; and while I decline this reiterated instance of your friendship and partiality, I confess I do it with regret; for stormy clouds overhanging the political horizon, so far from preventing me from coming forward in public office, would rather induce me to accept one, did not the reasons mentioned in the letter I have above referred to still operate. I lament they do so; but, thus circumstanced, I can only repeat my thanks for your many favors, and offer my best wishes for the prosperity of our happy constitution, and for him who, I doubt not, will with his usual ability pilot safely the vessel in which we are all embarked." — *Charleston, September 16th.*

* Mr. Marshall declined the proffered appointment, on the ground of its interference with his practice of the law, in which he had now become deeply engaged.

TO JOHN JAY.

Private.

Philadelphia, 31 August, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will have learnt from the public gazettes, and through other more authentic channels, that all that rested with me to do to give ratification to the treaty between this country and Great Britain is already accomplished. Mr. Pinckney's absence from the court of London, the information and aids it was expected he would derive from Mr. Short's presence and acquaintance with matters at that of Madrid, the pecuniary situation of our affairs in Holland requiring the attention of Mr. Adams in that country, and the little knowledge we had of the character and qualifications of Mr. Deas,* have occasioned no little embarrassment in this business. However, a mode is adopted which I hope will be effectual.

It has not been the smallest of these embarrassments, that the domineering spirit of Great Britain should revive again just at this crisis, and the outrageous and insulting conduct of some of her officers should combine therewith to play into the hands of the discontented, and sour the minds of those, who are friends to peace, order, and friendship with all the world; but this by the by.

The object of this letter is to pray you to aid me with such hints, relative to those points, which you conceive to be fit subjects for the further friendly negotiations on the trade with Great Britain, agreeably to the recommendation of the Senate; and which appear to have been in contemplation by the concluding part of the treaty signed by yourself and Lord Grenville.

* Chargé d'Affaires in London, during Mr. Pinckney's absence at Madrid.

I intended to have asked this favor of you at an earlier day; but a coincidence of unexpected circumstances has involved me in so much business and perplexity, that it has been delayed from time to time, since my arrival in this city, until the present moment. As nothing is now asked, that you have not, I am sure, revolved over and over again during your negotiation, and since the decision of the Senate thereupon, I persuade myself it will require but very little time for the digest I ask, and which I beg to receive as soon as you can make it convenient to give it to me. Circumstances make it necessary for me to leave this place if possible on Monday next for Virginia, in order to bring back my family; but instructions for the new negotiation must be prepared before I go. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

TO GEORGE CABOT.

Private and Confidential.

Philadelphia, 7 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letters, which, after reading, be so good as to return to me, will be the best apology I can offer for the liberty I am about to take, and for the trouble, which, if you comply with my request, it must necessarily give.†

To express all the sensibility, which has been excited in my breast by the receipt of young Lafayette's

---

* See Mr. Jay's answer in the APPENDIX, No. IV.

† The letters here alluded to were from George Washington Lafayette, the son of General Lafayette, and from M. Frestel, who had recently arrived together in Boston from France, and had written to President Washington, giving notice of their arrival.

letter, from the recollection of his father's merits, services, and sufferings, from my friendship for him, and from my wishes to become a friend and father to his son is unnecessary. Let me in a few words declare, that I will be his friend; but the manner of becoming so, considering the obnoxious light in which his father is viewed by the French government, and my own situation as the executive of the United States, requires more time to consider in all its relations, than I can bestow on it at present, the letters not having been in my hands more than an hour, and I myself on the point of setting out for Virginia to fetch my family back, whom I left there about the 1st of August.

The mode, which at the first view strikes me as the most eligible to answer his purposes and to save appearances, is, first, to administer all the consolation to the young gentleman, that he can derive from the most unequivocal assurances of my standing in the place of and becoming to him a father, friend, protector, and supporter. But, secondly, for prudential motives, as they may relate to himself, his mother and friends, whom he has left behind, and to my official character, it would be best not to make these sentiments public; and of course it would be ineligible, that he should come to the seat of the general government, where all the foreign characters (particularly that of his own nation) are residents, until it is seen what opinions will be excited by his arrival; especially, too, as I shall be necessarily absent five or six weeks from it on business in several places. Thirdly, considering how important it is to avoid idleness and dissipation, to improve his mind, and to give him all the advantages, which education can bestow, my opinion and my advice to him are, if he is qualified for ad-

mission, that he should enter as a student at the university in Cambridge, although it should be for a short time only; the expense of which, as also of every other means for his support, I will pay. And I now authorize you, my dear Sir, to draw upon me accordingly; and, if it is in any degree necessary or desired, that M. Frestel, his tutor, should accompany him to the university in that character, any arrangements which you shall make for the purpose, and any expense thereby incurred for the same, shall be borne by me in like manner.

One thing more, and I will conclude. Let me pray you, my dear Sir, to impress upon young Lafayette's mind, and indeed upon that of his tutor, that the reasons why I do not urge him to come to me have been frankly related, and that their prudence must appreciate them with caution. My friendship for his father, so far from being diminished, has increased in the ratio of his misfortunes; and my inclination to serve the son will be evidenced by my conduct. Reasons, which will readily occur to you, and which can easily be explained to him, will account for my not acknowledging the receipt of his or M. Frestel's letter. With sincere esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. You will perceive, that young Lafayette has taken the name of Motier. Whether it is best he should retain it, and aim at perfect concealment, or not, depends upon a better knowledge of circumstances than I am possessed of; and therefore I leave this matter to your own judgment, after a consultation with the parties.*

* *From Mr. Cabot's Reply.* — "The letter, which you did me the honor to write on the 7th, was received last evening, when I immediately waited on the gentlemen who are the subject of it. They were in a state of

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Elkton, 9 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I had no time yesterday morning to look into the gazettes, nor did I know until the evening that the French frigate *Medusa* had slipped her cables, and put to sea on the 31st ultimo, and was followed in a few hours by the *Africa*.

This circumstance, be the result what it may, I regret exceedingly, because the effect of the order for the departure of the latter will be the same, as to the British, as if she had been in the harbour of Newport, and we shall obtain no credit for it from the French and their partisans. As the appearance, however false, is susceptible of the interpretation, so it will be said,

---

anxiety respecting a new place of residence, where they might live unnoticed. Considerations of the kind which you have mentioned, and some others, render this eligible for the present; but it is found impracticable here. Already M. Motier is known to too many persons, and a public festival announced by the French consul for Monday next, at which all their citizens in this vicinity are expected to attend, occasions serious embarrassments; to which is added, that some circumstances of delicacy, relative to the family in which they are placed, make an immediate removal proper.

"It was at this moment of solicitude, that I arrived to testify to them the benignity of your intentions, by expressing those unequivocal assurances of friendship, which your goodness had dictated, and which were received with every emotion of the most lively sensibility. A conversation succeeded, which had for its object a relief from their present perplexity with the least possible deviation from the path you had proposed. In addition to the motives already explained for removing further than Cambridge, it was urged, that the studies now actually pursuing by M. Motier are entirely different from those prescribed in any of our universities, and that your desires therefore will be best accomplished by a continuance in his present course under M. Frestel. It was admitted, however, that other aids would be requisite in those branches of education, which M. Frestel does not profess. With a view to these, and to combine with them abstinence from society, it is thought best to seek a position near some principal town, where all the *desiderata* can

that the order was never intended to be issued until it was known there would be nothing for it to operate upon.

The purpose, however, of my writing you this letter is to request, that Mr. Monroe may be immediately and fully informed of facts, and directed to represent them truly as they are; for it may be relied upon, if the *Medusa* escapes being captured, M. Fauchet, whose mind is ardent, and who does not leave this country with the most favorable impressions of the views of the government towards his own, will paint this transaction in very high colors; and among other things will say, that, after waiting in vain a month to see if the executive would take effectual notice of the indignity offered to him, and the insult to its own sovereignty, he was obliged to forego his passage, or run the hazards he did to accomplish it. Being in haste, and just upon the point of proceeding, I will only add, that, with sincerity and truth, I am, &c.*

---

be found. No determination was formed, and we parted to reflect more on the step to be taken, and to examine if there were any situation in this quarter, which would correspond with their wishes; but to-day, on their visiting me, I found they had concluded it would be best to go to New York in the Friday's stage, where they expect to be accommodated in a country-house, which is in the possession of their friend, M. Lacolombe, and with whom they remain in retirement until you shall direct otherwise.

"The suddenness of their departure will deprive me of an opportunity of being essentially useful to them, and of executing your commands, which would be the most grateful occupation of my life. I shall give them letters to Colonel Wadsworth and to Colonel Hamilton, the latter of whom will probably know where they may be found after they shall be established." — *September 16th.*

* The Medusa was blockaded in the harbour of Newport by the British frigate Africa. A storm drove the Africa from her position near the shore, and the commander of the Medusa took advantage of this circumstance, cut his cables, and put to sea. M. Fauchet embarked for France on board this vessel. She was chased by the Africa, but not overtaken.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 16 September, 1795.

Sir,

If, when this reaches your hands, there should be no contract or other obligation existing on behalf of the United States for the purchase of land on the Potomac, intended for the public arsenal, I should wish all further negotiation in this business to be suspended, until proper inquiries can be made and information obtained, respecting the property at the junction of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers in this State. It has been represented to me, that this spot affords every advantage that could be wished for water-works to any extent, and that no place is more capable of complete defence at small expense. I am also informed, that from eight hundred to a thousand acres of land might be obtained there on reasonable terms. The land at the junction of the two rivers, including what is called Harper's Ferry, has lately been leased for seven years, and the lessee has the right of purchasing whenever it may be sold. Should this spot be fixed upon for the arsenal, the lessee will relinquish his title to the United States, reserving only a small piece of the land for the purpose of building stores and doing business. Six hundred acres of land adjoining this tract is, I am told, offered for sale by Colonel Bull for fifteen hundred pounds, Virginia money. Colonel Bull has a lease of this tract for seventy years at five pounds per hundred acres, and a number of years has been already paid in the lease. The fee is in General Henry Lee, who, I have no doubt, will dispose of his right on very reasonable terms.

There is another small tract with a saw-mill upon it, adjoining the two foregoing, which I am told may be also purchased.

From my own knowledge, I can speak of the eligibleness of this situation for a public arsenal; but, as I have never examined it very attentively, I am not able to speak so decidedly as to the advantages of erecting works there. These, however, I am told, are equal at least to any on the Potomac or its branches, having the advantage of a considerable fall in both rivers, which may be brought to operate at this place. At any rate, if the thing is open, it may be well to have inquiry made and prices ascertained, before it becomes known that this spot is in view. I am, &c.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Mount Vernon, 20 September, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I received with great pleasure the letter you wrote to me from Boston, dated the 2d of this month, as I always shall do any others you may favor me with. This pleasure was increased by hearing of the good health of Mrs. Knox and your family, and the agreeableness of your establishment at St. George's in the province of Maine. I may add, also, that the account given of the favorable disposition of the people generally in your quarter relative to the treaty with Great Britain, contributed not a little to the satisfaction I derived in hearing from you.

Next to a conscientious discharge of my public duties, to carry along with me the approbation of my constituents would be the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of; but, the latter being secondary, I cannot make the former yield to it, unless some criterion more infallible than partial (if they are not party) meetings can be discovered, as the touchstone of public

sentiment. If any power on earth could, or the Great Power above would, erect the standard of infallibility in political opinions, there is no being that inhabits this terrestrial globe, that would resort to it with more eagerness than myself, so long as I remain a servant of the public. But as I have found no better guide hitherto, than upright intentions and close investigation, I shall adhere to those maxims, while I keep the watch; leaving it to those, who will come after me, to explore new ways, if they like or think them better.

The temper of the people of this State, particularly the southern parts of it, and of South Carolina and Georgia, as far as it is discoverable from the several meetings and resolutions, which have been published, is adverse to the treaty with Great Britain; and yet I doubt much whether the great body of yeomanry have formed any opinion on the subject, and whether, if their sense could be fairly taken under a plain and simple statement of facts, nine tenths of them would not advocate the measure. But with such abominable misrepresentations as appear in most of the proceedings, it is not to be wondered at, that uninformed minds should be affrighted at the dreadful consequences that are predicted, and which they are taught to expect from the ratification of such a diabolical instrument, as the treaty is denominated. From North Carolina we hear little concerning it, and from Kentucky nothing.

The moment I received your letter, with one from young Lafayette, which was not until the evening preceding my departure for this place, I wrote to Mr. Cabot, the Senator, requesting, without letting my name appear, that the young gentleman might be provided, at my expense, with every thing that he and his tutor stood in need of; and as his coming to Philadelphia,

immediately at least, might, the French minister being there, occasion embarrassment, and be productive of no essential good, I proposed, until something more eligible could be devised, to have him entered at the university at Cambridge with his tutor. I did not write to the young gentleman myself, for reasons which will readily occur to you, but entreated Mr. Cabot to explain them to him in the most affectionate and consoling manner, and to assure him in the strongest terms, that I would be to him as a friend and father, and that he might to all intents and purposes count upon me as such.*

If your mind is still balancing between Philadelphia and Boston for winter-quarters, I sincerely wish it may settle on the former. Mrs. Washington and this family are all well, and unite in best regards for you, Mrs. Knox and family, with, dear Sir, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 23 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Two letters from you dated the 18th instant were received yesterday. For the reasons you have assigned, I think it best that Mr. Boudinot should fill the directorship of the mint, and request he may be informed so. At the same time, urge him to come forward, if for no other purpose than to arrange matters with the present

* *From General Knox's Letter.* — "The son of M. de Lafayette is here, accompanied by an amiable Frenchman as a tutor. Young Lafayette goes by the name of Motier, concealing his real name, lest some injury should arise to his mother, or to a young Mr. Russell of this town, now in France, who assisted in his escape. Your namesake [George Washington Lafayette] is a lovely young man, of excellent morals and conduct." — *Boston, September 2d.*

occupant, and derive from him all the insight into the business his experience has acquired, and which he promised me he would communicate to his successor. Inclosed is a blank commission for the successor of Mr. Desaussure, which may take date at the close of his services, according to the arrangement proposed above.

I also send a letter from Mr. Kinloch, relative to his nephew, who, from his account, is suffering in the cause of the unfortunate Lafayette. I wish you to acknowledge the receipt of it; but what consolation to give him, I know not. If the citizens of the United States in foreign countries commit acts, which are repugnant to their laws or usages, they certainly expose themselves to punishment. Not having any character in the Austrian dominions clothed as a functionary, I do not know of any channel through which a movement of any sort could be made.

If the French letter, which goes under cover with this, requires any act of mine, let it be returned with a translation and your opinion thereon.

I wait with some impatience to receive an official account of the result of Wayne's treaty with the Western Indians. When it is received at the war-office, give me the substance of it. By this, however, I mean no more, than whether the representation on the part of the Indians was complete, and whether he has come fully up to his instructions, exceeded, or fallen short of them, in advantages, and in what instances; what are the boundaries; whether the proceedings went on harmoniously, or were intermingled with difficulties, and of what sort and from whom. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 27 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 21st instant did not reach me until yesterday. A late letter of mine to you will have fixed the directorship of the mint upon Mr. Boudinot. The application, therefore, of Major Jackson, however fit he may be for the office, is too late. But, besides the reasons assigned in your letter against such an appointment at present, I should have preferred a character from another State, if one equally suitable could have been found, for the reasons you have often heard me mention, although they do not apply with the same force now as formerly.

With respect to Mr. D—— for the office of attorney-general, although I have a very good opinion of his abilities, and know nothing in his moral character or connexions that is objectionable, yet the reason I assigned when his name was first mentioned to me has still weight in my mind; that is, after a long and severely contested election, he could not obtain a majority of suffrages in the district he formerly represented. In this instance, then, the sense of his constituents respecting him personally has been fairly taken; and one of the charges against me relative to the treaty, you know, is, that I have disregarded the voice of the people, although that voice has never yet been heard, unless the misrepresentations of party, or at best partial meetings, can be called so.

I shall not, whilst I have the honor to administer the government, bring a man into any office of consequence knowingly, whose political tenets are adverse to the measures, which the general government are pursuing;

for this, in my opinion, would be a sort of political suicide. That it would embarrass its movements is most certain. But of two men equally well affected to the true interests of their country, of equal abilities, and equally disposed to lend their support, it is the part of prudence to give the preference to him, against whom the least clamor can be excited. For such a one my inquiries have been made, and are still making. How far I shall succeed, is at this moment problematical.

I have not relinquished my intention of being in Philadelphia about the middle of next month. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

Mount Vernon, 27 September, 1795.

SIR,

I have lately received three letters from you, two bearing date the 15th instant, the other the 21st. One of the former came to hand the 19th, the other the 22d, and the last yesterday.

Your signature as Secretary of State to the ratification of the treaty having been given on the 14th of August, and your resignation not taking place until the 19th, it became necessary in order to be consistent, (the original being despatched,) that the same countersign should appear to the copies, otherwise this act would not have been required of you.

It is not in my power to inform you at what time Mr. Hammond put the intercepted letter of M. Fauchet into the hands of Mr. Wolcott. I had no intimation of the existence of such a letter until after my arrival in Philadelphia the 11th of August. When Lord

Grenville first obtained that letter, and when the British minister here received it from him, are facts with which I am entirely unacquainted. I have never seen in whole or in part M. Fauchet's despatches numbered 3 and 6; nor do I possess any document, or knowledge of papers, which have affinity to the subject in question.

No man would rejoice more than I should to find, that the suspicions which have resulted from the intercepted letter were unequivocally and honorably removed. I am, &c.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 2 October, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 26th ultimo was received yesterday. It is not wonderful, that Mr. Randolph's late conduct, and the publication of his letter to me, should have excited an anxious curiosity to know what his explanations will be; but it is wonderful, that so much time should be required to give them birth.

Embarrassed, as it is to be apprehended he is in this business, his object, I conceive, must be to gain time, to puzzle, and to try if he cannot discover inconsistencies in the conduct of others relative to it. On no other ground can I account for his letter to me, dated the 21st ultimo, which, with his other two of the 15th, and my answer to the whole, I herewith enclose for the information of yourself and Colonel Pickering only.

His letters of the 15th received no acknowledgment, and at first I hesitated whether to give any to that of the 21st. After a while I thought of referring him to you for information on those points, which it was evidently as much or more in your power than in mine to give him; but finally I conceived it most eligible to furnish him with no pretexts, and therefore wrote what you will see. I did it, because, if delay was his object, it would be promoted by my silence; and because, which probably would have answered his purposes still better, it might have afforded him some ground for saying he was doomed to be a victim, and, with a view to accomplish it, the means to his vindication were denied or withheld.

These reasons, added to a disposition to do him all manner of justice, induced me to give him concise answers to all his queries, as far as the means were within my knowledge, although fully convinced in my own mind of the insidious tendency of them.

Whether similar inquiries have been made of you, of Colonel Pickering, or of both, by him, I know not. If they have, to see if he could involve inconsistency in the answers has been his aim. And to know what kind of superstructure he might build on information, which he has, if any, obtained from M. Fauchet, it was necessary to ascertain in the first place, whether the government was in possession of any part of that gentleman's letters, numbered 3 and 6, by which this superstructure might be endangered. I was on the point once of hinting to him, that I hoped nothing in his vindication would render it necessary to publish the whole of M. Fauchet's letter; but, on second thoughts I declined it, lest he should consider it as a threat, and make an improper use of it.

As I shall shortly be in Philadelphia, I will not add

any thing on this subject; but from you, if any thing more transpires, I should be glad to hear. The present enclosures may remain in your hands until my return to the city. I am, &c.

TO EDWARD CARRINGTON.

Private and Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 9 October, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 2d instant came duly to hand, and I shall wait the result of the proposed inquiries.

One request frequently begets another, and that is the case at present. You know full well, that the office of State is vacant, but you may not know, that I find difficulty in filling it. In the appointments to the great offices of the government, my aim has been to combine geographical situation, and sometimes other considerations, with abilities and fitness of *known* characters. In pursuance of this system, I have tried to bring Judge Patterson, Mr. Johnson of Maryland, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina into this office, but they have all declined; the last by the post of Wednesday. I would have made an offer of it to Mr. Henry in the first instance, but two reasons were opposed to it; first, ignorance of his political sentiments, for I should consider it an act of governmental suicide to bring a man into so high an office, who was unfriendly to the constitution and laws, which are to be his guide; and, secondly, because I had no idea, that he would accept the office, until General (late Governor) Lee gave some reasons, which have induced me in a degree to draw a different conclusion, he having assured me at the same time, that he believed Mr. Henry's

sentiments relative to the constitution were changed, and that his opinion of the government was friendly. Of these matters, however, so important in their nature, I wish to learn the opinion of others. And of whom can I inquire, more likely to know than yourself?

Let me then come to the point. If, in the opinion of yourself and General Marshall, Colonel Innes is a fit character to be Attorney-General of the United States, will accept the office, and enter upon the duties of it without delay, no application is to be made to Mr. Henry, be his sentiments what they may.* If, on the contrary, that event does not take place, I impose upon you the task, and pray you to have the goodness to forward the enclosed letter to him by express (the cost of which I will pay), provided you accord in sentiment with General Lee, with respect to the political opinions of that gentleman, and have reason to believe, that he has expressed no opinions adverse to the treaty with Great Britain, but is disposed to the adoption of it; for, otherwise, it would place both him and me in embarrassed situations.

From the instances, which have fallen within your own knowledge, you can form some idea of the difficulties I experience in finding out, and prevailing upon, fit characters to fill offices of importance. In the case before us, I am sensible that I am imposing a delicate task upon you; but, from the peculiar circumstances thereof, it is in some measure a necessary one; and,

* A previous letter had been written to Mr. Carrington making inquiry about Colonel Innes, in relation to the office of Attorney-General. The reason why the President did not wish any advances to be made to Mr. Henry, if Colonel Innes concluded to accept that office, doubtless was, that two of the high officers of state could not with propriety be taken from Virginia. Colonel Innes declined the appointment.

having a high opinion of General Marshall's honor, prudence, and judgment I consent to your consulting him on this occasion, as you did in the case of Colonel Innes.

I have, I must confess, but little expectation that Mr. Henry will accept the offer of it, if it gets to him, and therefore I must look forward to the consequence of his refusal. Let me ask, therefore, if another trial should be made, and a refusal ensue, and ultimately it should be found eligible to remove the present Secretary of War to the office of State, if it should be agreeable to himself, would you fill his place as Secretary of War?

You will, my dear Sir, perceive, that the whole of this letter is perfectly confidential, written perhaps with more candor than prudence; but I rely on your goodness and prudence to appreciate my motives. My letter to Mr. Henry is left open for your perusal, that the whole may be before you. If it goes forward, seal it; if not, return it to, dear Sir, your friend, &c.*

---

* *From Mr. Carrington's Reply.* — "I have been honored with yours of the 9th instant, and immediately consulted General Marshall thereon. As to a change in Mr. Henry's opinions upon the constitution, he has been so little within the circle of our movements, that we must rather rely on the intelligence of General Lee, who has had much communication with him, than our own observations. Mr. Henry has for several years been in a degree silent on public topics; nor have we heard of any thing whatever as coming from him relating to the treaty. We are not without apprehensions, that General Lee estimates too highly the affections of Mr. Henry towards the constitution. General Marshall being, however, decidedly of opinion, in which I cordially joined, that your letter should be forwarded to him, I have this morning despatched it by express. In this determination we were governed by the following reasons.

"First, his non-acceptance, from domestic considerations, may be calculated on. In this event, be his sentiments on either point what they may, he will properly estimate your letter, and, if he has any asperities, it must tend to soften them, and render him, instead of a silent

TO PATRICK HENRY.

Mount Vernon, 9 October, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Whatever may be the reception of this letter, truth and candor shall mark its steps. You doubtless know, that the office of State is vacant; and no one can be more sensible, than yourself, of the importance of filling it with a person of abilities, and one in whom the public would have confidence.

It would be uncandid not to inform you, that this office has been offered to others; but it is as true, that it was from a conviction in my own mind, that you would not accept it, (until Tuesday last, in a conversation with General Lee, he dropped sentiments which made it less doubtful,) that it was not offered first to you.

I need scarcely add, that if this appointment could

---

observer of the present tendency of things, in some degree active on the side of government and order.

"Secondly, should he feel an inclination to go into the office proposed, we are confident, very confident, he has too high a sense of honor to do so with sentiments hostile to either of the points in view. This we should rely on, upon general ground; but under your letter a different conduct is, we conceive from our knowledge of Mr. Henry, impossible.

"Thirdly, we are fully persuaded that a more deadly blow could not be given to the faction in Virginia, and perhaps elsewhere, than that gentleman's acceptance of the office in question, convinced as we are of the sentiments he must carry with him. So much have the opposers of the government held him up as their oracle, even since he has ceased to respond to them, that any event, demonstrating his active support to government, could not but give the party a severe shock.

"To these reasons we think it not inapplicable to add, that, in the present crisis, Mr. Henry may reasonably be calculated on as taking the side of government, even though he may retain his old prejudices against the Constitution. He has indubitably an abhorrence of anarchy; to be at the head of a popular assembly we know is his delight; but there is much difference between that situation, and scrambling for pre-

be made to comport with your own inclination, it would be as pleasing to me, as I believe it would be acceptable to the public. With this assurance, and with this belief, I make you the offer of it. My first wish is, that you would accept it; the next is, that you would be so good as to give me an answer as soon as you conveniently can, as the public business in that department is now suffering for want of a Secretary.

I persuade myself, Sir, it has not escaped your observation, that a crisis is approaching, that must, if it cannot be arrested, soon decide whether order and good government shall be preserved, or anarchy and confusion ensue. I can most religiously aver I have no wish, that is incompatible with the dignity, happiness, and true interest of the people of this country. My ardent desire is, and my aim has been, as far as depended upon the executive department, to comply strictly with all our engagements, foreign and domestic; but to keep the United States free from political connexions with every other country, to see them

---

eminence in a state of confusion, for which he is ill fitted. This we know Mr. Henry is fully sensible of. We know, too, that he is improving his fortune fast, which must additionally attract him to the existing government and order, the only guarantees of property. Add to this, that he has no affection for the present leaders of the opposition in Virginia.

"You will perceive, Sir, that we have changed the order in which you directed the propositions to Colonel Innes and Mr. Henry to stand. The fact is, we have as yet had no opportunity of acting with respect to the first gentleman, nor do we know when we shall. This was likely to suspend operations longer than the nature and importance of the objects admitted, even had we supposed you particularly attached to the order directed; this consideration, together with the observations made in regard to Mr. Henry, appeared naturally to dictate the course we have taken. Should Colonel Innes arrive before the return of the express, General Marshall will hold his preliminary conversations, as preparatory to a proposition, in case of a refusal in the other instance."—*Richmond, October 13th.*

independent of all and under the influence of none. In a word, I want an *American* character, that the powers of Europe may be convinced we act for *ourselves*, and not for others. This, in my judgment, is the only way to be respected abroad and happy at home; and not, by becoming the partisans of Great Britain or France, create dissensions, disturb the public tranquillity, and destroy, perhaps for ever, the cement which binds the union.

I am satisfied these sentiments cannot be otherwise than congenial to your own. Your aid therefore in carrying them into effect would be flattering and pleasing to, dear Sir, &c.*

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 12 October, 1795.

SIR,

Your letters of the 2d and 5th instant came to my hands on Thursday last; but it was not in my power conveniently to acknowledge the receipt of them by the succeeding post.† It is a very singular

* Mr. Henry's answer to this letter is not found among Washington's papers. It is only known, that he declined the offer; but his opinions may be inferred from his letter to Governor Lee (see Vol. X. APPENDIX, No. XXIII.), and the following extract from Mr. Carrington's letter, which accompanied Mr. Henry's answer. "It gives us pleasure to find," says Mr. Carrington, "that, although Mr. Henry is rather to be understood as probably not an approver of the treaty, his conduct and sentiments generally, both as to the government and yourself, are such as we calculated on, and that he received your letter with impressions, which assure us of his discountenancing calumny and disorder of every description." — *Richmond, October 20th.*

† At this time, Mr. Pickering, though Secretary of War, discharged the duties also of Secretary of State. The letters above referred to related to Mr. Pinckney's negotiations in Spain. "Mr. Pinckney had obtained," said he, "two interviews with the Duke de Alcudia, but to no

occurrence, that Mr. Pinckney should make use of a cipher to which there is no counterpart in the office of state. A kind of fatality seems to have pursued this negotiation, and, in short, *all* our concerns with Spain, from the appointment of Mr. Carmichael under the new government, as minister to that country, up to the present day. If the ciphers, which have been furnished to Mr. Gouverneur Morris, Mr. Jay, Mr. Adams, and Colonel Humphreys, or any of them, are different from those, by which the letter of Mr. Pinckney has been tried, let them also be resorted to. Otherwise, as the business has commenced in error, the continuance therein is highly probable, until that gentleman is informed of this extraordinary inattention, and is thereby led to correct it; and of course the most material and interesting parts of his communications will be lost. Enough, however, appears already, to show the temper and policy of the Spanish court, and its undignified conduct, as it respects themselves, and insulting as it relates to us; and I fear it will prove, that the late treaty of peace with France portends nothing favorable to these United States.

I am glad to find, however, that matters are going on well in Morocco; but much concerned to hear of the unfavorable decision in the High Court of Appeals, on one of the spoliation cases in London.*

---

purpose. That court appears to be playing the old game of delay. The Duke said he could not negotiate until he received from Mr. Jaudenes the answers of this government to the propositions he was directed to make. Mr. Pinckney assured the Duke, that no such propositions had been made. A number of passages are in a cipher, which Mr. Taylor could find no key to explain." — *October 2d.*

* "A letter from Mr. Simpson," said Mr. Pickering, "promises well for the treaty he is negotiating with the Emperor of Morocco. The military presents were delivered in the presence of an army of ten thousand men, and were well received."

I shall set out for Philadelphia this day; but business with the commissioners of the Federal City will detain me in Georgetown to-morrow, and of course keep me a day longer from the seat of government, than I expected. I am, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.

Philadelphia, 21 October, 1795.

SIR,

In several of the public gazettes I had read your note to the editor of the *Philadelphia Gazette*, with an extract from a letter, addressed to me, of the 8th instant; but it was not until yesterday that the letter itself was received.*

It is not difficult from the tenor of that letter to

---

* Mr. Randolph's note to the editor of the *Philadelphia Gazette* was as follows. "Sir, the letter, from which the enclosed is an extract, relates principally to the requisition of a particular paper. My only view at present is to show my fellow citizens what is the state of my vindication." — *October 10th.*

Extract. — "You must be sensible, Sir, that I am inevitably driven to the discussion of many confidential and delicate points. I could with safety immediately appeal to the people of the United States, who can be of no party. But I shall wait for your answer to this letter, so far as it respects the paper desired, before I forward to you my general letter, which is delayed for no other cause. I shall also rely, that any supposed error in the general letter, in regard to facts, will be made known to me, that I may correct it if necessary; and that you will consent to the whole of the affair, howsoever confidential and delicate, being exhibited to the world. At the same time I prescribe to myself the condition not to mingle any thing, which I do not sincerely conceive to belong to the subject."—*October 8th.*

The delay of Mr. Randolph's letter in coming to the President's hands, was occasioned by its passing the latter on his way from Mount Vernon to Philadelphia, where he arrived on the 20th. But the extract was sent to the printer on the 10th, two days after the letter was written, and before it could, in any event, have reached the President.

perceive what your objects are ; but, that you may have no cause to complain of the withholding of any paper however private and confidential, which you shall think necessary in a case of so serious a nature, I have directed that you should have the inspection of my letter of the 22d of July, agreeably to your request, and you are at full liberty to publish without reserve *any* and *every* private and confidential letter I ever wrote to you ; nay, more, every word I ever uttered to you or in your hearing, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication. I grant this permission, inasmuch as the extract alluded to manifestly tends to impress on the public mind an opinion, that something has passed between us, which you should disclose with reluctance, from motives of delicacy with respect to me.

You know, Sir, even before the treaty was laid before the Senate, that I had difficulties with respect to the commercial part of it, with which I professed to be the least acquainted, and that I had no means of acquiring information thereon without disclosing its contents, not to do which until it was submitted to the Senate had been resolved on. You know, too, that it was my determination, previous to this submission, to ratify the treaty, if it should be so advised and consented to by that body ; and that the doubts, which afterwards arose and were communicated verbally to Mr. Hammond, proceeded from more authentic information of the existence of what is commonly called the "Provision Order" of the British Government. And finally, you know the grounds on which my ultimate decision was taken, as the same were expressed to you, the other Secretaries of departments, and the late Attorney-General, after a thorough investigation of the subject in all the aspects in which it could be placed.

As you are no longer an officer of the government, and propose to submit your vindication to the public, it is not my desire, nor is it my intention, to receive it otherwise than through the medium of the press. Facts you cannot mistake, and, if they are fairly and candidly stated, they will invite no comments.

The extract from your letter to me, dated the 8th instant, being published in all the gazettes, I request that this letter may be inserted in the compilation you are now making; as well to show my disposition to furnish you with every means I possess towards your vindication, as that I have no wish to conceal any part of my conduct from the public. That public will judge, when it comes to see your vindication, how far and how proper it has been for you to publish private and confidential communications, which oftentimes have been written in a hurry, and sometimes without even copies being taken; and it will, I hope, appreciate my motives, even if it should condemn my prudence, in allowing you the unlimited license herein contained.

I am, &c.

TO EDMUND RANDOLPH.*

Philadelphia, 25 October, 1795.

SIR,

Your letter of the 24th has been received. It is full of innuendoes. I shall, therefore, once more, and for the last time, repeat, in the most unequivocal terms, that you are at full liberty to publish any thing that ever passed between us, written or oral, that you think

* Memorandum attached to this letter, as recorded in the letter-book. "The following is the rough draft of a letter to Edmund Randolph, but, upon reconsideration, it was not sent."

will subserve your purposes. A conscious rectitude, and an invariable endeavour to promote the honor, welfare, and happiness of this country, by every means in the power of the executive, and within the compass of my abilities, leave no apprehension on my mind from any disclosure whatsoever.

To, whom, or for what purpose, you mean to apply the following words of your letter, "*I have been the meditated victim of party spirit,*" will be found, I presume, in your defence; without which I shall never understand them. I cannot conceive they are aimed at me; because a hundred times you have heard me lament, from the bottom of my soul, that difference of sentiments should have occasioned those heats, which are disquieting a country, otherwise the happiest in the world; and you have heard me express the most ardent wish, that some expedient could be devised to heal them. The disclosure to me, by an officer of government, of M. Fauchet's intercepted letter, after the contents were communicated to him, was an act of such evident propriety, as no man of candor, entertaining a proper sense of duty, can possibly condemn. I do not see, then, how this will apply to the case, more than the first.

You have, Sir, entirely mistaken the principle, upon which (in contravention of the opinion of the gentleman, who is discharging the duties of Secretary of State,) I gave you the inspection of what you declared to be the *only* paper you were in want of, to complete your defence. My sole motive in furnishing it was, that it might not be imputed to me, that any thing, which you conceived necessary to your vindication, was withheld; for, however differently the matter may appear in the sequel, I am free to declare, that I cannot, at this moment, see what relation there is

between the treaty with Great Britain and the details and suggestions, which are contained in the intercepted letter of M. Fauchet. I am still more at a loss to understand the meaning of these other words in your letter. "*But I shall disclose even what I am compelled to disclose, under the operation of the necessity, which you yourself have created.*" Can these expressions allude to my having put M. Fauchet's letter into your hands, in presence of the heads of departments, for explanation of the passages which related to your conversations with him? Or to the acceptance of your resignation, voluntarily and unexpectedly offered? Or to the assurance, given in my letter of the 20th of August in answer to yours of the 19th (and most religiously observed on my part), not to mention any thing of the matter, until you had had an opportunity of clearing it up; whilst you, on the other hand, were making free communications thereof in all quarters, and intimating to your friends, that, in the course of your vindication, you should bring things to view, which would affect me more than any thing, which had yet appeared? If neither of these, nor an expectation that I should have passed the matter over unnoticed, or in a private explanation *only* between ourselves, I know nothing to which the sentiment can have the least reference. But I do not write from a desire to obtain explanations; for it is not my meaning, nor shall I proceed any farther in discussions of this sort, unless necessity should call for a simple and candid statement of the business, to be laid before the public. I am, &c.*

* No further written communications appear on this subject. In December a pamphlet was published, entitled "*A Vindication of Mr. Randolph's Resignation.*" In this pamphlet are contained a narrative of the principal events relating to the case, the correspondence between

TO EDWARD CARRINGTON.

Philadelphia, 1 November, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Your favors of the 8th, 13th, and 20th ultimo have been duly received; the last enclosing one from Mr. Henry. Your motives for forwarding my letter to that gentleman, and transposing the course of that business, meet my entire approbation; and the opening of his, in answer thereto, was an act of indispensable necessity, resulting therefrom, and of course is approved.

I am not less pleased, at the resolution you had taken to proceed no farther with Colonel Innes, than merely to sound his inclinations on the subject referred to, until you should hear farther from me. The result of your inquiries, however, be so good as to communicate.

---

the President and Mr. Randolph, the whole of Fauchet's letter, and Mr. Randolph's remarks upon the parts touching his conduct. From the nature of the circumstances, Mr. Randolph had a difficult task to perform, as he was obliged to prove a negative, and to explain vague expressions and insinuations connected with his name in Fauchet's letter. The inference from the general tenor of that letter was, that Mr. Randolph, while Secretary of State, had shown himself accessible to a bribe from the French minister, and that he was in his heart favorable to the Western insurrection, either from party motives, or from others not known. The suspicion thus excited was strengthened by the fact, that he had changed his mind respecting the ratification of the treaty, and had recently suggested difficulties and promoted delay.

M. Fauchet wrote a declaration, however, as soon as it was known to him that his letter had been intercepted, and when he was on the point of leaving the country to return to France, denying in the most positive terms, that Mr. Randolph had ever indicated to him a willingness to receive money for personal objects, and affirming, that in his letter he had no intention to say any thing to the disadvantage of Mr. Randolph's character. On this declaration, and a general review of his conduct as known to the President, Mr. Randolph founded his "Vindication." Some parts of the pamphlet show a bitterness of feeling, and a warmth of temper, which weaken the force of the author's statements, and render it at least doubtful in the reader's mind, whether

I thank you, my good Sir, for giving me permission to trouble you on similar occasions ; and I certainly shall avail myself of the indulgence. And, as an earnest of my disposition to do it, may I ask with what disposition it is expected your Assembly will meet ? How will it develope itself? And what are likely to be the progress and issue, as it relates to the acts of the general government ?

Enclosed are twenty-five dollars, the cost of the express, which was sent to Mr. Henry. With very great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

---

candor in every instance prevailed over resentment. It is gratifying to know, however, that Mr. Randolph's sentiments, in regard to Washington, were subsequently changed.

" As the asperity," says Chief Justice Marshall, " with which Mr. Randolph spoke of the President on other occasions as well as in his 'Vindication,' was censured by many, it may rescue the reputation of that gentleman from imputations, which might be injurious to it, to say, that, some time before his death, he had the magnanimity to acknowledge the injustice of these imputations. A letter to the Honorable Bushrod Washington, of July 2d, 1810, a copy of which was transmitted by Mr. Randolph to the author, contains the following declarations among others of similar import. 'I do not retain the smallest degree of that feeling, which roused me fifteen years ago against some individuals. For the world contains no treasure, deception, or charm, which can seduce me from the consolation of being in a state of good-will towards all mankind ; and I should not be mortified to ask pardon of any man with whom I have been at variance for any injury, which I may have done him. If I could now present myself before your venerated uncle, it would be my pride to confess my contrition, that I suffered my irritation, let the cause be what it might, to use some of those expressions respecting him, which, at this moment of my indifference to the ideas of the world, I wish to recall, as being inconsistent with my subsequent conviction. My life will I hope be sufficiently extended for the recording of my sincere opinion of his virtues and merit, in a style which is not the result of a mind merely debilitated by misfortune, but of that Christian philosophy, on which alone I depend for inward tranquillity.' " — MARSHALL's *Life of Washington*, 2d edit. Vol. II., Note, No. XX.

TO GENERAL DE BOUVINGHAUSEN.

Philadelphia, 18 November, 1795.

SIR,

I received your Excellency's letter, dated at Stutgard, the 10th of June last, in which you ask my aid in securing to you the payment of certain legacies, which you represent to have been destined for yourself, your three sons, and M. Franc, by the will of the late Major-General Baron Steuben, my highly valued friend.

Immediately on the receipt of your letter, I caused inquiry to be made about the subject of it, and lose no time to transmit to you the result. This you will find in the enclosed letter from Colonel Pickering, Secretary of War, to Colonel Benjamin Walker, in his answer, and in a copy of the Baron's last will.

If the fortune of Baron Steuben had been as ample as his heart was benevolent, none of his friends would have been omitted in the dispositions of his will. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO CHARLES LEE.

Private.

Philadelphia, 19 November, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

The office of Attorney-General of the United States is not yet filled. The reason why it is not, General Lee, at my request, will frankly relate to you. If you could make it convenient, and agreeable to yourself to accept it, I should derive pleasure therefrom, both from public and private considerations; being persuaded that the duties of the office will be well executed,

and because I should be much gratified in having a confidential officer about me on whom I could rely. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.*

TO JOHN EAGER HOWARD.

Private.

Philadelphia, 19 November, 1793.

DEAR SIR,

It may seem strange to those not acquainted with circumstances, that the office of State should be so long vacant; but causes not within my power to control have occasioned it. I have at length proposed to Colonel Pickering to go from the War office into that of State, and he has agreed to do so. This of course makes a vacancy in the former. Permit me to ask you, Sir, to fill it.

I shall use no other arguments to induce your acceptance, than such as candor dictates. These are, that I believe the duties of the office will be well executed by you, that I conceive the appointment will be

---

* *Mr. Lee's Reply.* — "I have been honored with your letter of the 19th, which I take the earliest opportunity of answering. In expressing my willingness to accept the office of Attorney-General of the United States, I do it with the utmost diffidence of my competency, and can only assure you I will endeavour to discharge its important duties with diligence and fidelity. I had been arranging for a retired life; but, while public affairs wear a most critical appearance, I shall not withhold any service which it may be in my power to render to the community, and I feel the highest pleasure and personal gratification in being called by you near your person. I will reach Philadelphia as soon as I can, consistently with my duty as a member of the General Assembly here, which will detain me about ten days. With the most perfect consideration, esteem, and respect, I am, dear Sir, yours, &c."— *Richmond, November 30th.*

very agreeable to the public, and, though of less consideration in a national point of view, because it would be very agreeable to, dear Sir, &c.*

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON MOTIER DE LAFAYETTE.

Philadelphia, 22 November, 1795.

My dear young Friend,

It was with sincere pleasure I received your letter from Boston; and, with the heart of affection, I welcome you to this country.

Considerations of a political nature, added to those which were assigned by yourself or M. Frestel, of a

---

* *Mr. Howard's Reply.* — "Sir; I had the honor yesterday in Baltimore to receive from General Lee your letter by him; and, being obliged to return immediately to this place, I could not answer it by the mail which left Baltimore this morning. This mark of your confidence has made so deep an impression on my mind, that I should not hesitate to comply with your wish, could it be done without making sacrifices, that I am persuaded you would not think advisable; and I assure you, that, although such an appointment was unexpected, I should not be induced by less important considerations to decline accepting it.

"My constitution was so much impaired during the war, that for several years the effects were sensibly felt; and I have attributed the good share of health, that I have for some years enjoyed, entirely to my present pursuits, which require constant exercise. The business, which I am engaged in here, will not admit of that constant exercise; and I am at times so much affected by it, as to fear I shall be obliged to resign my seat in the legislature. To abandon my present domestic arrangements for the comfort and education of a growing family deserves some consideration; but that circumstance alone would not influence me so far as to withhold, in the present situation of affairs, any service I might be thought capable of rendering the public. It is with regret that I am compelled to decline accepting so honorable an appointment; but I have some consolation in believing it will be in my power, at this crisis of affairs, to be of service to my country in my present station; and I trust that our Legislature will shortly give decided proofs of their attachment to the true interests of their country." — *Annapolis, November 23d.*

sort more private but not less interesting to your friends, left no doubt in my mind of the propriety of your remaining *incog.*, until some plan advantageous to yourself, and eligible for all parties, could be devised for bringing you forward under more favorable auspices.

These considerations, and a journey which I was in the act of commencing when I received your letter (and from which I have not long since been returned to this city), restrained me from writing to you at that time; but I imposed upon Mr. Cabot, a gentleman of character and one in whose discretion I could place entire confidence, the agreeable office of assuring you, in my name, of my warmest affection and support, and of my determination to stand in the place of a father and friend to you under all circumstances; requesting him at the same time to make arrangements with M. Frestel for supplying your immediate wants, and moreover that he would add thereto every thing consolatory on my part. All of which I can renew to you in the most unequivocal terms; for you may be assured, that the sincere and affectionate attachment, which I had to your unfortunate father, my friend and companion in arms, will extend with not less warmth to his son. Do not therefore ascribe my silence, from the period of your interview with Mr. Cabot, to a wrong cause.

The causes, which have imposed this conduct on us both, not being entirely removed, it is my desire, that you and M. Frestel would repair to Colonel Hamilton in the city of New York, who is authorized by me to fix with you on the most eligible plan for your present accommodation. This gentleman was always in habits of great intimacy with, and is warmly attached to M. de Lafayette. You may rely, therefore, on his friendship and the efficacy of his advice.

How long the causes, which have withheld you from me, may continue, I am not able at this moment to decide; but be assured of my wishes to embrace you, so soon as they shall have ceased, and that, whenever the period arrives, I shall do it with fervency. In the mean time, let me begin with fatherly advice to you to apply closely to your studies, that the season of your youth may be improved to the utmost, that you may be found the deserving son of a meritorious father. Adieu. Believe me to be, as you will always find me, yours, &c. *

TO JOHN EAGER HOWARD.

Philadelphia, 30 November, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have been duly favored with your letters of the 23d and 26th instant from Annapolis. The first was received with regret, the second † assuredly with pleasure; for, while I am resolved that no misrepresentations, falsehoods, or calumny, shall make me swerve from what I conceive to be the strict line of my duty, and while I have suffered the various attempts to destroy all confidence in my administration to pass without notice, it is grateful to my feelings to find

* This letter was accompanied by the following note to M. Frestel. — "Sir; The enclosed letter for M. de Lafayette is left open, and put under cover to you, for your perusal. Indeed it is intended as much for your information as his, as it will render a second letter in detail unnecessary, at a time when I am under a pressure of public business, occasioned by the approaching session of Congress. To the above I shall just add, that, as the preceptor and friend of M. de Lafayette, I pray you to count upon my attentions and friendship, and learn, that it is my expectation that you will accompany him in whatever situation he may be placed; and moreover that you will let me know, at all times, what he has occasion for. I am, &c."

† Enclosing a declaration of the Assembly of Maryland.

so respectable a body, as the legislature of Maryland, appreciating my motives at the expense of my calumniators.

Had your inclination and private pursuits permitted you to accept the office, that was offered to you, it would have been a very pleasing circumstance to me, and I am persuaded, as I observed to you on a former occasion, a very acceptable one to the public; but the reasons, which you have assigned for not doing it, carry conviction along with them, and must, however reluctantly, be submitted to. With very great regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN H. STONE, GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND.

Philadelphia, 6 December, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

By Thursday's post I was favored with your letter of the 27th ultimo, enclosing a Declaration of the General Assembly of Maryland. At any time the expression of such a sentiment would have been considered as highly honorable and flattering. At the present, when the voice of malignancy is so high-toned, and no attempts are left unessayed to destroy all confidence in the constituted authorities of this country, it is peculiarly grateful to my sensibility; and, coming spontaneously, and with the unanimity it has done from so respectable a representation of the people, it adds weight as well as pleasure to the act.

I have long since resolved, for the present time at least, to let my calumniators proceed without any notice being taken of their invectives by myself, or by any others with my participation or knowledge. Their views, I dare say, are readily perceived by all the

enlightened and well-disposed part of the community; and by the records of my administration, and not by the voice of faction, I expect to be acquitted or condemned hereafter.

For your politeness in making the unofficial and friendly communication of this act, I pray you to receive my thanks, and assurances at the same time of my being, with very great esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.*

---

* The Declaration of the General Assembly of Maryland, referred to in this letter, was expressed in the following language, and was unanimously adopted by the House of Delegates and the Senate.

"Resolved unanimously, that the General Assembly of Maryland, impressed with the liveliest sense of the important and disinterested services rendered to his country by the President of the United States; convinced that the prosperity of every free government is promoted by the existence of rational confidence between the people and their trustees, and is injured by misplaced suspicion and ill-founded jealousy; considering that public virtue receives its best reward in the approving voice of a grateful people, and that, when this reward is denied to it, the noblest incentive to great and honorable actions, to generous zeal and magnanimous perseverance, is destroyed; observing, with deep concern, a series of efforts, by indirect insinuation, or open invective, to detach from the first magistrate of the Union the well-earned confidence of his fellow citizens; think it their duty to declare, and they do hereby declare, their unabated reliance on the *integrity*, *judgment*, and *patriotism* of the President of the United States."

This Declaration was brought forward in the House of Delegates by William Pinkney, a name afterwards illustrious in the legal, legislative, and diplomatic annals of his country. Mr. McHenry, in a letter giving an account of the matter to the President, wrote; "Mr. Pinkney, a man of real talents and genius, and a fascinating speaker, took charge of the *Declaration*. He originated it in the House, and supported it beautifully and irresistibly. His influence and conduct on the occasion overawed some restless spirits, and reached even into the Senate." — *Annapolis, December 5th.* For an eloquent speech pronounced by Mr. Pinkney to the legislature of Maryland six years before, when he was only twenty-five years old, see WHEATON'S *Life of William Pinkney*, p. 8.

TO GOUVERNEUR MORRIS.

Philadelphia, 22 December, 1795.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am become so unprofitable a correspondent, and so remiss in my correspondences, that nothing but the kindness of my friends, in overlooking these deficiencies, could induce them to favor me with a continuance of their letters; which to me are at once pleasing, interesting, and useful. To a man immersed in debt, and seeing no prospect of extrication but by an act of insolvency (perhaps absolvency would be a better word), I compare myself; and like him, too, afraid to examine the items of the account, I will at once make a lumping acknowledgment of the receipt of many interesting private letters from you, previously to your last arrival in England, and will begin with those written subsequently on the 3d of July and 22d of August.

As the British government has repealed the order for seizing our provision vessels, little more need be said on that head, than that it was the *principle*, which constituted the most obnoxious and exceptionable part of it, and the condition in which this country was thereby placed in her relation with France. Admitting, therefore, that the compensation to *some* individuals was adequate to what it might have been in another quarter, yet the exceptions to it on these grounds remained the same.

I do not think that Colonel Innes's report to the governor of Kentucky was entirely free from exceptions. But let the report be accompanied with the following remarks. First, that the one, which Lord Grenville might have seen published, was disclaimed by Colonel Innes, as soon as it appeared in the public gazettes, on account of its incorrectness. Secondly,

an irritable spirit at that time pervaded all our people at the westward, arising from a combination of causes (but from none more powerful, than the analogous proceedings of Great Britain in the north, to those of Spain in the south, towards the United States and their Indian borderers), which spirit required some management and soothing. But, thirdly and principally, Lord Grenville should have adverted to the many remonstrances, which have gone from this country against the conduct of his own, which I will take the liberty to say has been as impolitic for his nation, if peace and a good understanding with this was its object, as it has been irritating to us. And, that it may not be conceived that I am speaking at random, let his Lordship be asked, if we have not complained, — That some of their naval officers have insulted and menaced us in *our own ports?* That they have violated our national rights, by searching vessels and impressing seamen within our acknowledged jurisdiction, and in an outrageous manner have seized the latter by *entire crews* in the West Indies, and have done the like, but not so extensively, in all parts of the world? That the Bermudian privateers, or to speak more correctly, pirates, and the admiralty court of that island, have committed the most atrocious depredations and violences on our commerce, in capturing, and in their adjudications afterwards, such as were never tolerated in any well-organized or efficient government? That the governor of Upper Canada has ordered in an official and formal manner settlers within our own territory, and far removed from the posts they have withheld from us, to withdraw, and forbidden others to settle on the same? That the persons, to whom their Indian affairs are intrusted, have taken unwearied pains and practised every deception to keep those people in a

state of irritation and disquietude with us; and, to the last moment, exerted every nerve to prevent the treaty, which has lately been concluded between the United States and them from taking effect?

These complaints were not founded on vague and idle reports, but on indubitable facts; facts, not only known to the government, but so notorious as to be known to the people also, who charge to the last item of the above enumeration the expenditure of a million or more of dollars annually for the purpose of self-defence against Indian tribes thus stimulated, and for chastising them for the ravages and cruel murders, which they had committed on our frontier inhabitants. Our minister at the court of London has been directed to remonstrate against these things with force and energy. The answer, it is true, has been (particularly with respect to the interferences with the Indians) a disavowal. Why then are not the agents of such unauthorized, offensive, and injurious measures made example of? For wherein, let me ask, consists the difference *to us* between their being the acts of government, or the acts of unauthorized officers or agents of the government, if we are to sustain all the evils, which flow from such measures?

To this catalogue may be added the indifference, nay, more than indifference, with which the government of Great Britain received the advances of this country towards a friendly intercourse with it, even after the adoption of the present constitution, and since the operation of the government; and, also, the ungracious and obnoxious characters, (rancorous refugees, as if done with design to insult the country,) whom they have sent among us as their agents, who, retaining all their former enmity, could see nothing through a proper medium, and becoming the earwigs of their

minister here, were always laboring under some unfavorable information and impression, and probably not communicating in a less exceptionable manner than they themselves received or conceived them.

I give you these details (and, if you should again converse with Lord Grenville on the subject you are at liberty, unofficially to mention them, or any of them, according to circumstances), as evidences of the impolitic conduct (for so it strikes me) of the British government towards these United States; that it may be seen how difficult it has been for the executive, under such an accumulation of irritating circumstances, to maintain the ground of neutrality, which had been taken; and at a time when the remembrance of the aid we had received from France in the revolution was fresh in every mind, and while the partisans of that country were continually contrasting the affections of *that* people with the unfriendly disposition of the *British government.* And that, too, as I have observed before, while *their own* sufferings during the war with the latter had not been forgotten.

It is well known, that peace has been (to borrow a modern phrase) the order of the day with me since the disturbances in Europe first commenced. My policy has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honor to remain in the administration, to maintain friendly terms with, but be independent of, all the nations of the earth; to share in the broils of none; to fulfil our own engagements; to supply the wants and be carriers for them all; being thoroughly convinced, that it is our policy and interest to do so. Nothing short of self-respect, and that justice which is essential to a national character, ought to involve us in war; for sure I am, if this country is preserved in tranquillity twenty years longer, it may bid defiance in a just cause

to any power whatever; such in that time will be its population, wealth, and resources.

If Lord Grenville conceives, that the United States are not well disposed towards Great Britain, his candor, I am persuaded, will seek for the causes, and his researches will fix them, as I have done. If this should be the case, his policy will be opposed to the continuance or renewal of the irritating measures, which I have enumerated; for he may be assured, though the assurance will not, it is probable, carry conviction with it from me to a member of the British administration, that a liberal policy will be one of the most effectual means of deriving advantages to their trade and manufactures from the people of the United States. It will contribute, more than any thing else, to obliterate the impressions, which have been made by their late conduct towards us.

In a government as free as ours, where the people are at liberty, and will express their sentiments (oftentimes imprudently, and, for want of information, sometimes unjustly), allowances must be made for occasional effervescences; but, after the declaration which I have here made of my political creed, you can run no hazard in asserting, that the executive branch of this government never has suffered, nor will suffer, while I preside, any improper conduct of its officers to escape with impunity, nor give its sanctions to any disorderly proceedings of its citizens.

By a firm adherence to these principles, and to the neutral policy which has been adopted, I have brought on myself a torrent of abuse in the factious papers in this country, and from the enmity of the discontented of all descriptions. But, having no sinister objects in view, I shall not be diverted from my course by these, nor any attempts which are, or shall be made to

withdraw the confidence of my constituents from me. I have nothing to ask; and, discharging my duty, I have nothing to fear from invective. The acts of my administration will appear when I am no more, and the intelligent and candid part of mankind will not condemn my conduct without recurring to them.

The treaty entered into with Great Britain has, as you have been informed, undergone much and severe animadversion; and, though a more favorable one were to have been wished, which the policy perhaps of Great Britain might have granted, yet its demerits are not to be estimated by the opposition it has received; nor is this opposition sanctioned by the great body of the yeomanry in these States. They, whatever their opinions of it may be, are disposed to leave the decision where the constitution has placed it. But an occasion was wanting, and the instrument, by those who required it, was deemed well calculated, for the purpose of working upon the affections of the people of this country towards those of France, whose interests and rights under our treaty with that nation they represented as being violated; and, with the aid of the provision order, and the irritating conduct of the British ships of war and agents, as mentioned before, the means were furnished, and more pains taken, than upon any former occasion, to raise a general ferment with a view to defeat the treaty.*

* On the 14th of December, Mr. Jay wrote as follows to President Washington. — "I have lately received much intelligence from several quarters. Some allowances are to be made for zeal; but all my accounts agree in representing the public mind as becoming more and more composed, and that certain virulent publications have caused great and general indignation, even among many who had been misled into intemperate proceedings, and had given too much countenance to factious leaders. The latter, however, persevere with great activity, though with less noise and clamor. These are political evils, which in all ages have grown out of such a state of things, as naturally as certain physical combinations produce whirlwinds and meteors."

But knowing that you have other correspondents, who have more leisure, and are equally capable of detailing these matters, I will leave you to them and the gazettes for fuller information and a more minute account of the prevailing politics. Thanking you for the interesting intelligence and opinions contained in your letter of the 22d of August, I shall only add, that, with sincere esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, your affectionate friend.

TO JOHN TRUMBULL.*

Philadelphia, 31 December, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

A few days ago I received your letter of the 3d of October, and yesterday, in very good order, the prints you were so obliging as to send me, which are indeed very handsome, and much admired by those, who have had the opportunity of passing judgment on them. For this mark of your polite attention to me, I pray you to accept my sincere and cordial thanks.

When the whole are completed they will form an elegant set, and will be much desired. I will thank you for directing the remainder of mine to be placed in frames, like those now sent, which are very handsome, and the cost shall be paid as soon as it is known to me; or, if you would let me know beforehand what will be the amount, the money shall be remitted to you or your order.

I fear from your silence with respect to your return

---

* Mr. Trumbull was at this time in London, having gone to England as secretary to Mr. Jay. He was afterwards appointed a commissioner in conjunction with Mr. Gore and Mr. Pinkney for carrying into execution the seventh article of the treaty.

to this country, that we are not to expect it soon; but, whether here or elsewhere, you will always possess the sincere esteem, regard, and friendship of, dear Sir, your affectionate and obliged, servant.

TO JAMES McHENRY.

Private.

Philadelphia, 20 January, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

Let this letter be received with the same friendship and frankness with which it is written. Nothing would add more to the satisfaction this would give me, than your acceptance of the offer I am going to make.

Without further preface, then, will you suffer me to nominate you to the office of Secretary of War? That I may give evidence of the candor I have professed above, I shall inform you, that, for particular reasons, more fit for an oral than a written communication, this office has been offered to General Pinckney of South Carolina, Colonel Carrington of Virginia, and Governor Howard of Maryland, and that it would now give me sincere pleasure if you would fill it.

After making this declaration, I can press you no farther; but I press for an immediate answer, as the public service is suffering much for want of a head to the department of war. If you consent to this nomination, prepare to come on as soon as it is made, for the reason just mentioned; although, at this season of the year, and in the present state of the roads, you should not find it convenient to bring Mrs. McHenry and your family along with you.

Sound, I pray you, and let me know without delay, if Mr. Samuel Chase would accept a seat on the

Supreme Judicial bench of the United States, made vacant by the resignation of Mr. Blair. If his decision is in the affirmative, he will at once perceive the necessity of being here if possible by the first Monday in the next month, at which time that court is to sit in this city. Although these subjects are both of an interesting nature, I will add no more on them at present; but assure you of the sincere friendship and affectionate regard of, &c.*

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, GOVERNOR OF CONNECTICUT.†

Philadelphia, 1 February, 1796.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your letter of the 21st ultimo, announcing the death of Mr. Huntington, late governor of Connecticut.

At the same time, that I regret the loss of so worthy a character, I cannot but feel consoled, that the administration of the government of that State has fallen into such good hands as yours. And let me pray you to accept my sincere thanks for the assurance therein given, of your readiness to observe the relation, which it bears to the general government.

I feel equally obliged by the expression of your concern for the attacks, which have been made upon my administration. If the enlightened and virtuous part of the community will make allowances for my involuntary errors, I will promise, that they shall have no cause to accuse me of wilful ones. Hoping for the former, I feel no concern on account of the latter.

---

* Mr. McHenry and Mr. Chase both consented to the proposal, and were accordingly appointed.

† The same, who signed the Declaration of Independence. The Secretary of the Treasury was his son.

Your son, so far as my knowledge of him extends, is a very deserving character. He discharges the duties of his office with integrity and ability; and, I am persuaded, may bid defiance to all those, who seem to be continually on the lookout for occasions, without being at the trouble to investigate facts, to arraign the conduct of public officers. With very great esteem and respect, I am, &c.

TO THE EARL OF BUCHAN.

Philadelphia, 20 February, 1796.

My Lord,

Having seen several persons from the vicinity of your estate of Dryburgh Abbey, with your Lordship's certificates of their honest and orderly deportment, one or two of whom I have employed and found deserving the character, I take the liberty of troubling your Lordship with the perusal of the enclosed annunciation of a design, which I have had in contemplation two or three years, but lately only have resolved to carry it into execution.

I accompany the information, my Lord, with an unequivocal declaration, that it is not my intention to invite emigrants, even if there be no prohibitory act of your government opposed to it. My sole object is, if there are persons on the move, who incline to associate and become tenants on such a plan as I offer, that, being apprized of the measure, they may decide how far their views would be accommodated by it.

The staple produce of the part of the country, in which my Mount Vernon estate lies, being wheat, I mean to fix the rent in that article as most convenient and equitable for both landlord and tenant; and I set

it at a bushel and a half for every acre contained in the lease, which will be all arable, with the privileges detailed in the printed notification. In failure of a crop of this article, the rent may be discharged in cash, at the price it bears in the market.

I have but little expectation myself of maturing this plan, so as to carry it into full effect next year, nor would I wish to do it with the slovenly farmers of this country, if I had a well-founded hope of obtaining this class of men from any other, particularly Great Britain, where husbandry is well understood, and the language similar.

Having had occasion lately to write to Dr. Anderson of Colfield on other matters, I have detailed my plan much more at large, than I chose to trouble your Lordship with; and have sent him a sketch of the farms, with their relative situation to each other, and divisions into fields, lanes, lots, &c.; from whence an idea more accurate than can be formed from the printed notification might be had; but it is not my wish, that any man or set of men should engage without first, by themselves or agents completely qualified and instructed, viewing the premises and judging for them selves.

I pray your Lordship to present me in respectful terms, in which Mrs. Washington unites, to Lady Buchan, and that you will be persuaded of the respect and consideration with which I have the honor to be your Lordship's, &c.

TO THOMAS PINCKNEY.

Philadelphia, 20 February, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 10th of October from Madrid has been duly received.* With regret I read the request, which is contained in it; but the footing on which you have placed the matter forbids opposition, or even persuasion on my part that you would recede from it; although the task of supplying your place to my satisfaction, to the satisfaction of your country, or of the court you will leave, will not be found easy.

Having heard through different channels, that you had concluded a treaty with Spain, and that the vessel which had it on board was spoken at sea, we are in daily and anxious expectation of its arrival. The information has diffused general pleasure, and will be soothing to the inhabitants of the Western waters, who were beginning to grow restive and clamorous to obtain the navigation.

---

* *From Mr. Pinckney's Letter.* — "The situation of my family and the attention necessary to my other domestic concerns requiring my return home, I take the liberty of requesting the favor, that you will direct my letters of recall to be expedited so as to reach England by the middle of the month of June next, unless you should intend to recall me at an earlier period. Before that time arrives, I shall have served four years in the diplomatic line; a period which I have always contemplated as the longest I could with propriety dedicate to this employment, and which I also consider as sufficiently extensive for the interest of the United States that the same person should continue in mission, unless very peculiar circumstances should require a prolongation of the term.

"I have sincerely felt for the unpleasantly delicate situation in which late events have placed you as our chief magistrate, and it would give me infinite concern to think, that I had in any degree contributed to occasion these embarrassments. I can only say, that I have in every thing acted according to my best judgment, and, in what concerns yourself, by the dictates of the sincerest friendship and grateful respect." — *Madrid, October 10th*, 1795.

Since the re-confinement of M. de Lafayette, (after the attempt made by Dr. Bollmann and Mr. Huger, both of whom are now in this city, to effect his escape,) we have heard nothing further respecting him, than that his confinement is more rigorous than before. We know, indeed, that Madame de Lafayette and his two daughters have been at Hamburg; that it was reported they were coming to America, but that, instead of doing so, they went to Vienna to try the effect of personal solicitation to obtain his release. Newspaper accounts go farther and say they were permitted to proceed to Olmutz. But how far the latter information is to be depended upon, and, if true, what has been or will be the result, is altogether unknown to me.

I need hardly mention how much my sensibility has been hurt by the treatment this gentleman has met with, or how anxious I am to see him liberated therefrom; but what course to pursue, as most likely and proper to aid the measure, is not quite so easy to decide on. As President of the United States, there must be a commitment of the government by any interference of mine; and it is no easy matter in a transaction of this nature for a public character to assume the garb of a private citizen, in a case that does not relate to himself. Yet such is my wish to contribute my mite to accomplish this desirable object, that I have no objection to its being made known to the Imperial ambassador in London, who, if he thinks proper, may communicate it to his court, that this event is an ardent wish of the people of the United States, to which I sincerely add mine. The time, the manner, and even the measure itself, I leave to your discretion; as circumstances, and every matter which concerns this gentleman, are better known on that, than they are on this side of the Atlantic.

I shall add no more on this subject, and but little on any other at present. The gazettes, which I presume you receive, will show you in what manner the public functionaries are treated here. The abuse, however, which some of them contain, has excited no reply from me. I have a consolation, which no earthly power can deprive me of, that of acting from my best judgment; and I shall be very much mistaken, if I do not soon find, that the public mind is recovering fast from the disquietude into which it has been thrown by the most wilful, artful, and malignant misrepresentations that can be imagined. The current is certainly turned, and is beginning to run strong the other way. But I am proceeding farther than I intended, and will therefore conclude with assurances of the esteem and regard with which I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THOMAS PINCKNEY.

Philadelphia, 5 March, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

The ship *Favorite*, by which these despatches are sent, having been delayed much longer in this port than was expected, affords me an opportunity of informing you, that the Spanish treaty arrived here on the 22d ultimo, that it was laid before the Senate as soon after as the accompanying papers could be copied, and that, on the 3d instant, the ratification of it was advised and consented to by a unanimous vote of that body. Hence you may form an opinion of the general approbation of your negotiation. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 6 March, 1796.

SIR,

I have given your letter of instructions to our minister at the court of London an attentive consideration, and approve them; unless the last clause but one should give rise to the negotiation of an article, which may not accord with the result of a motion pending in the House of Representatives, (introduced, if my memory serves me, by Mr. Smith of Baltimore,) of which, however, I have but an imperfect recollection.

I think too, even with the advantages proposed to be obtained by the reduction, that our negotiation should adhere, even to the hazard of the treaty altogether, to vessels of one hundred tons' burthen for the West India trade.

These things, and a general view of the subject as comprised in the instructions, added to matters which have been, and may yet be introduced into Congress, which may have relation to the proposed negotiation, incline me to think, that it would be better to forbear sending the despatches for Mr. Pinckney by the ship *Favorite*, as other conveyances will, no doubt, soon offer, and to take more time in consulting the most intelligent mercantile characters within your reach, on the principles and heads of the several articles, which are the subject of them.

The instructions ought, in my opinion, to be accompanied with powers. They may be offered or not, as occasion shall require. They can, with this alternative, do no harm; whereas the want of them, if called for, may occasion a suspension of the measure. Mr. Adams's letter, and Lord Grenville's propositions,

relative to captured vessels of a certain description, and with respect to the pay of the commissioners, require immediate attention.

Proclamations of the treaties with Spain and Algiers should issue as soon as they can be prepared, and the ratification of the former be despatched as soon as possible. Measures also for carrying these, and the other treaties which have been ratified and proclaimed, into effect, ought to meet with no delay that can be avoided.

And I request you would concert measures with the Secretaries of War and the Treasury, if necessary, for proceeding vigorously and securely with the arsenal at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah.

I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.*

Philadelphia, 25 March, 1796.

SIR,

The resolution moved in the House of Representatives, for the papers relative to the negotiation of the treaty with Great Britain,† having passed in the affirmative, I request your opinion,

1. Whether that branch of Congress has or has not a right, by the constitution, to call for those papers?

2. Whether, if it does not possess the right, it would be expedient under the circumstances of this particular case to furnish them?

---

* Sent as a circular to the other members of the Cabinet.

† The treaty with Great Britain, commonly called *Jay's Treaty*, having been ratified in London on the 28th day of October, 1795, and returned to the United States, a copy of it was laid before Congress, by the President, on the 1st of March. It now became the duty of

3. And, in either case, in what terms would it be most proper to comply with, or to refuse, the request of the House?

These opinions in writing, and your attendance, will be expected at ten o'clock tomorrow. I am, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 31 March, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

I do not know how to thank you sufficiently for the trouble you have taken to dilate on the request of the House of Representatives for the papers relative to the British treaty; nor how to apologize for the

---

the House of Representatives to make appropriations for carrying the treaty into effect. The party in the House, opposed to the treaty, were not satisfied with the course pursued by the President in promulgating it by a proclamation, before the sense of the House of Representatives had been in any manner obtained upon the subject. A resolution was brought forward by Mr. Livingston, which, after an amendment by the original mover, assumed the following shape.

"Resolved, that the President of the United States be requested to lay before this House a copy of the instructions given to the minister of the United States, who negotiated the treaty with Great Britain communicated by his message of the 1st instant, together with the correspondence and documents relating to the said treaty, excepting such of said papers as any existing negotiation may render improper to be disclosed."

A debate arose, which did not terminate till the 24th of March, when the resolution passed in the affirmative by a vote of sixty-two to thirty-seven, and it was accordingly sent to the President by a committee of the House. The President replied to the committee, "that he would take the request of the House into consideration."

The members of the cabinet were unanimous in advising the President not to comply with the resolution. Each of them stated the grounds of his opinion in writing. During the progress of the debate, Chief Justice Ellsworth drew up an argument, showing that the papers could not be constitutionally demanded by the House of Representatives. A message was therefore framed, and sent to the House on the 30th of

trouble, much greater than I had any idea of giving, which you have taken to show the impropriety of that request.*

I had, from the first moment, and from the fullest conviction in my own mind, resolved to *resist the principle*, which was evidently intended to be established by the call of the House of Representatives; and only deliberated on the manner, in which this could be done with the least bad consequences.

To effect this, three modes presented themselves to me. First, a denial of the papers *in toto*, assigning concise but cogent reasons for that denial; secondly, to grant them in whole; or, thirdly, in part; accompanied in both the last-mentioned cases with a pointed protest against the right of the House to control treaties, or to call for papers without specifying their object, and against the compliance being drawn into a precedent.

I had as little hesitation in deciding, that the first was the most tenable ground; but, from the peculiar circumstances of this case, it merited consideration, if the *principle* could be saved, whether facility in the provisions might not result from a compliance. An attentive examination of the subject and papers, however, soon convinced me, that to furnish *all* the papers would be highly improper, and that a partial delivery of them would leave the door open for as much calumny as

---

March, at the conclusion of which, the President said; "A just regard to the constitution, and to the duty of my office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbid a compliance with your request." This message is inserted in the part of the present work containing SPEECHES AND MESSAGES.

* The subject of the call of the House of Representatives had been referred to Mr. Hamilton for his opinion. He returned a long and able paper, in which he maintained with great force of argument the principle adopted by the President.

a refusal of them altogether, perhaps more, as it might, and I have no doubt would be said, that all such as were essential to the purposes of the House were withheld.

Under these impressions I proceeded, with the heads of departments and the attorney-general, to collect materials and to prepare an answer, subject however to revision and change, according to circumstances. This was ready on Monday, and proposed to be sent in on Tuesday; but it was delayed until I should hear from you, which happened on that day about noon. This induced a further postponement until yesterday, notwithstanding the apparent and anxious solicitude, which was visible in all quarters to learn the result of the application.

Finding that the draft, which I had prepared, embraced most if not all the principles, which were detailed in yours of yesterday, though not the reasonings; that it would take considerable time to copy yours; and, above all, having understood, that, if the papers were refused, a fresh demand with strictures upon my conduct was to be expected, I sent in the answer which was ready, and have reserved yours as a copious resource, in case the matter should go any further.

I could not be satisfied without giving you this short explanation of the business, expressing again my sincere thanks for the pains you have taken to investigate this subject, and to assure you, over and over, of the warmth of my friendship, and of the affectionate regard, with which I am, &c.*

* On the back of the draft of this letter is the following memorandum in the author's handwriting. "This is not a correct copy. In making a fair one from it, some alterations took place. The ideas, however, are the same."

TO GEORGE WASHINGTON MOTIER DE LAFAYETTE.

Philadelphia, 31 March, 1796.

My dear Sir,

Your letter of the 28th instant was received yesterday. The enclosures, which accompanied it, evidence much discretion, and your conduct therein meets my entire approbation.

In the early part of this month I put a letter into the hands of Colonel Hamilton, inviting you to this place; and expected, until your letter of the above date was received, to have embraced you under my own roof to-morrow or next day.

As the period for this seems to be more distant, from the purport of your inquiries, I again repeat my former request, and wish that without delay you and M. Frestel would proceed immediately to this city, and to my house, where a room is prepared for you and him.

Under expectation of your doing this, it is as unnecessary, as it might be improper, to go more into detail, until I have the pleasure of seeing you, and of rendering every service in my power to the son of my friend, for whom I have always entertained the purest affection, which is too strong not to extend itself to you. Therefore believe me to be, as I really am, sincerely and affectionately yours, &c.*

* After leaving Boston, young Lafayette resided with a friend in the neighbourhood of New York, where he remained with his tutor in comparative seclusion. On the 18th of March the following resolution and order were passed by the House of Representatives in Congress.

"Information having been given to this House, that a son of General Lafayette is now within the United States;

"Resolved, that a committee be appointed to inquire into the truth of the said information, and report thereon; and what measures it would

TO HENRY KNOX.

Philadelphia, 4 April, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

Before this will have reached you, you must have seen in the gazettes, that I have taken the liberty, without a previous consultation, to nominate you the commissioner for ascertaining the true St. Croix of the Eastern boundary of the United States, agreeably to the fifth article of the treaty lately entered into with Great Britain. I hope it will be convenient and agreeable for you to accept the trust, the appointment having been confirmed by the Senate.

As the gazettes will give you in detail a resolution of the House of Representatives, calling upon the President for all the papers, excepting such as

---

be proper to take, if the same be true, to evince the grateful sense entertained by this country for the services of his father.

"Ordered that Mr. Livingston, Mr. Sherburne, and Mr. Murray be appointed a committee, pursuant to the said resolution."

As chairman of this committee, Mr. Livingston wrote to young Lafayette as follows.

"SIR,

"Actuated by motives of gratitude to your father, and eager to seize every opportunity of showing their sense of his important services, the House of Representatives have passed the resolution, which I have the pleasure to communicate. The committee being directed to inquire into the fact of your arrival within the United States, permit me to advise your immediate appearance at this place, that the legislature of America may no longer be in doubt, whether the son of Lafayette is under their protection, and within the reach of their gratitude.

"I presume to give this advice, as an individual personally attached to your father, and very solicitous to be useful to any person in whose happiness he is interested. If I should have that good fortune on this occasion, it will afford me the greatest satisfaction. I am, &c.

"EDWARD LIVINGSTON."

This letter and the resolution of the House of Representatives were the "enclosures" mentioned above, which were forwarded to the President by George W. Lafayette, who asked his advice as to the course he should pursue.

might respect pending treaties, relative to that treaty; also the debates thereupon, and my answer; it is unnecessary to repeat them. I am beginning to receive, what I had made my mind up for on this occasion, the abuse of Mr. Bache and his correspondents. The answer, which I have given, is referred to a committee of the whole House for Wednesday next, the probable result of which it is too early yet to predict or even to guess at. These are unpleasant things, but they must be met with firmness. Present me to Mrs. Knox and the family in acceptable terms, and be assured of the friendship and affectionate regard of, &c.

P. S. At a proper time, after knowing whether you accept the appointment or not, you will hear officially from the Secretary of State.*

TO EDWARD CARRINGTON.

Private.

Philadelphia, 1 May, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

With much pleasure I received your letter of the 22d ultimo; and, if the sense of the great body of

*In his answer General Knox stated reasons why he should have wished to be excused from undertaking the charge of commissioner; but he added, "I have, however, in a private letter to Colonel Pickering said, that the appointment might stand as it is for the present. Not that I desire it, but merely as it might be expedient to have an ostensible appearance on the part of the executive of a readiness to execute the treaty." General Knox further observed; "The great mass of the people of New England, I verily believe nine tenths, approve of the reply to the House of Representatives as truly wise and unanswerable." — *Boston, April 4th.* He finally declined the appointment of commissioner, and David Howell, of Rhode Island, was nominated to the Senate in his place.

citizens in Virginia should be expressed in the manner you seem to expect, it would give me and, I believe, every friend to order and good government throughout the United States very great satisfaction, more so than similar sentiments from any other State in the Union; for people living at a distance from it know not how to believe it possible, that its representation, both in the General and State legislatures, can speak a language, which is repugnant to the sense of their constituents, especially too as they seem to give the tone to all the States south of them.*

Whatever my own opinion may be on this or any other subject interesting to the community at large, it always has been and will continue to be my earnest desire to learn, and, as far as is consistent, to comply with, the public sentiment; but it is on great

* *From Mr. Carrington's Letter.* — "The late votes of the House of Representatives, which have just reached us, and from which it appears that appropriations are not intended to be made for giving effect to the treaty between the United States and Great Britain, have, in my opinion, brought our political maladies to a crisis. The disorganizing machinations of a faction are no longer left to be nourished and inculcated on the minds of the credulous by clamorous demagogues, while the great mass of citizens, viewing these as evils at a distance, remain inactive. The consequences of a failure of the treaty are too plain and too threatening to the unparalleled happiness and prosperity we enjoy, not to excite alarm in the minds of all, who are attached to peace and order. This class of citizens will now come forward and speak for themselves, and will be found to compose the great body of the community. I may possibly be mistaken. I however feel a confidence in an opinion, that the sense of Virginia to this purpose will shortly be extensively expressed in public meetings and by petitions. A meeting of the people of this city will take place on Monday next, for the purpose of expressing their opinions on the pending measures, and setting on foot a petition or remonstrance to the House of Representatives thereon. From what I can learn from various parts of the country I verily believe, that similar measures will be adopted at least in many counties. Feeling as I do a strong conviction, that the intelligence contained in this letter is well founded, I have indulged myself in the satisfaction of communicating it to you, and hope that events will realize it" — *Richmond, April 22d.*

occasions only, and after time has been given for cool and deliberate reflection, that the real voice of the people can be known.

The present, however, is one of those great occasions, than which none more important has occurred, or may occur again to call forth their decision; and to them the appeal is now made. No candid man in the least degree acquainted with the progress of this business will believe for a moment, that the *ostensible* dispute was about papers, or whether the British treaty was a good one or a bad one, but whether there should be a treaty at all without the concurrence of the House of Representatives. This was striking at once, and that boldly, too, at the fundamental principles of the constitution; and, if it were established, would render the treaty-making power, not only a nullity, but such an absolute absurdity as to reflect disgrace on the framers of it. For will any one suppose, that they who framed, or those who adopted, that instrument ever intended to give the power to the President and Senate to make treaties, and, declaring that when made and ratified they should be the supreme law of the land, would in the same breath place it in the power of the House of Representatives to fix their vote on them; unless apparent marks of fraud or corruption (which in equity would set aside any contract) accompanied the measure, or such striking evidence of national injury attended their adoption, as to make a war or any other evil preferable? Every unbiassed mind will answer in the negative.

What the source and what the object of all this struggle is, I submit to my fellow-citizens. Charity would lead one to hope, that the motives to it have been pure. Suspicions, however, speak a different language, and my tongue for the present shall be silent.

Such further information on this head, or any other of similar importance, which may come to your knowledge, and which your leisure and inclination may enable you to give, will be very acceptable to, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO JOHN JAY, GOVERNOR OF NEW YORK.

Philadelphia, 8 May, 1796.

SIR,

You judged very right when, in your letter of the 18th ultimo, you observed, that I can have but very little time for private letter-writing; but, if my friends will put up with the hasty and indigested ones I can write under such circumstances, there are a few, among whom permit me the gratification to place you, with whom I should feel very happy to correspond, and, while I hold my present office, to learn their sentiments upon any of the important measures, which come before the executive of the United States.*

I am sure the mass of citizens in these United States mean well, and I firmly believe they will always *act*

---

* *From Mr. Jay's Letter.* — "Your answer to the call for papers meets with very general approbation here. I have full faith that all will end well, and that France will find us less easy to manage than Holland or Geneva. The session of our legislature is concluded, and nothing unpleasant has occurred during the course of it. I think your measures will meet with general and firm support from the great majority of this State. There is no defection among the Federalists. As to the others, they will act according to circumstances. These contentions must give you a great deal of trouble; but it is apparent to me, that the conclusion of them, like the conclusion of the late war, will afford a train of reflections, which will console and compensate you for it. Attachment to you, as well as to my country, urges me to hope and to pray, that you will not leave the work unfinished. Remain with us at least while the storm lasts, and until you can retire like the sun in a calm, unclouded evening. May every blessing here and hereafter attend you." — *New York, April 18th.*

well whenever they can obtain a right understanding of matters; but in some parts of the Union, where the sentiments of their delegates and leaders are adverse to the government, and great pains are taken to inculcate a belief, that their rights are assailed and their liberties endangered, it is not easy to accomplish this; especially, as is the case invariably, when the inventors and abettors of pernicious measures use infinitely more industry in disseminating the poison, than the well disposed part of the community in furnishing the antidote. To this source all our discontents may be traced, and from it all our embarrassments proceed. Hence serious misfortunes, originating in misrepresentation, frequently flow, and spread, before they can be dissipated by truth.

These things do, as you have supposed, fill my mind with much concern and with serious anxiety. Indeed, the trouble and perplexities which they occasion, added to the weight of years, which have passed over me, have worn away my mind more than my body, and render ease and retirement indispensably necessary to both, during the short time I have to stay here. It would be uncandid, therefore, and would discover a want of friendship and confidence, as you have expressed a solicitude for my at least riding out the storm, not to add, that nothing short of events, or such imperious circumstances, as I hope and trust will not happen, and might render a retreat dishonorable, will prevent the public annunciation of it in time to obviate a misapplication of votes, at the election of President and Vice-President of the United States in December next, upon myself.

I congratulate you on the tranquil session just closed in your State, and upon the good dispositions generally, which I am informed prevail among the citizens therein. With most friendly sentiments I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Sunday afternoon, 9 May, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letter presents a serious, perhaps a just view of the subject, which has been under consideration; and, as I wish in every thing, particularly in matters of foreign relation, to proceed with caution, I request that your letter to the Governor-General of Canada, the instructions to Major Lewis, and all your arrangements respecting the reception of the posts, may accord with the ideas contained therein.

Let the march of the troops, which are to take possession of the posts, be facilitated as much as possible, and let every measure necessary thereto, for supplying them on the march and when there, be concerted without delay. I am, as always, yours, &c.

TO THE EMPEROR OF GERMANY.

Philadelphia, 15 May, 1796.

It will readily occur to your Majesty, that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the chief of a nation to be silent and passive, in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your Majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis de Lafayette; and my friendship

for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities which they experience; among which, his present confinement is not the least distressing.

I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estates, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all these circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings, which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, Sir, on this occasion to be its organ; and to entreat, that he may be permitted to come to this country, on such conditions and under such restrictions, as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

As it is a maxim with me not to ask what, under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory.

May the Almighty and Merciful Sovereign of the universe keep your Majesty under his protection and guidance.*

* "This letter was transmitted to Mr. Pinckney, to be conveyed to the Emperor through his minister at London. How far it operated in mitigating immediately the rigor of Lafayette's confinement, or in obtaining his liberation, remains unascertained."—MARSHALL'S *Life of Washington*, 2d edit. Vol. II. p. 388.

TO THOMAS PINCKNEY.

Philadelphia, 22 May, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

To my letters of the 20th of February and 5th of March I beg leave to refer you for the disclosure of my sentiments on the subjects then mentioned to you. Very soon afterwards a long and animated discussion in the House of Representatives respecting the treaty of amity, commerce, and navigation with Great Britain, took place, and continued in one shape or another until the last of April, suspending in a manner all other business, and agitating the public mind in a higher degree than it has been at any period since the revolution. And nothing, I believe, but the torrent of petitions and remonstrances, which were pouring in from all the eastern and middle States, and were beginning to come pretty strongly from that of Virginia, requiring the necessary provisions for carrying the treaty into effect, would have produced a division (fifty-one to forty-eight) in favor of the appropriation.

But as the debates, which I presume will be sent to you from the department of State, will give you a view of this business more in detail than I am able to do, I shall refer you to them. The enclosed speech, however, made by Mr. Ames at the close of the discussion, I send to you; because, in the opinion of most, who heard it delivered or have read it since, his reasoning is unanswerable.*

* This speech produced a remarkable sensation at the time. President Kirkland speaks of it as follows, in his biographical sketch prefixed to the *Works of Fisher Ames*. "His speech on the appropriation for the British treaty was an era of his political life. For many months he had been sinking under weakness, and though he had attended the long and interesting debate on this question, which involved the constitution and the peace of the United States, it was feared he would be unable to

The doubtful issue of the dispute, and the real difficulty in finding a character to supply your place at the court of London, has occasioned a longer delay than may have been convenient or agreeable to you. But as Mr. King * of the Senate, who it seems had resolved to quit his seat at that board, has accepted the appointment, and will embark as soon as matters can be arranged, you will soon be relieved.

In my letter of the 20th of February, I expressed in pretty strong terms my sensibility on account of the situation of the Marquis de Lafayette. This is increased by the visible distress of his son, who is now with me, and grieving for the unhappy fate of his parents. This circumstance, giving a poignancy to my own feelings, has induced me to go a step farther than I did in the letter above mentioned, as you will perceive by the enclosed address (a copy of which is also transmitted for your information) to the Emperor of Germany, to be forwarded by you in such a manner, and under

---

speak. But, when the time came for taking a vote so big with consequences, his emotions would not suffer him to be silent. His appearance, his situation, the magnitude of his subject, the force and the pathos of his eloquence, gave this speech an extraordinary power over the feelings of the dignified and numerous assembly who heard it. When he had finished, a member in opposition moved to postpone the decision of the question, that they might not vote under the influence of a sensibility, which their calm judgment might condemn." See this speech in the *Works of Fisher Ames*, p. 58.

* Rufus King, Senator from New York. He was nominated to the Senate as minister to London on the 19th of May. In speaking of Mr. King as a suitable person for this appointment, Mr. Hamilton said in a letter to the President; "The importance, to our security and commerce, of a good understanding with Great Britain renders it very important that a man able, and not disagreeable to that government, should be there. Mr. King is a remarkably well-informed man, a very judicious one, a man of address, a man of fortune and economy, whose situation affords just ground of confidence; a man of unimpeached probity where he is known, a firm friend to the government, a supporter of the measures of the President; a man, who cannot but feel that he has strong pretensions to confidence and trust."

such auspices, as in your judgment shall be deemed best; or to be withheld, if from the evidence before you, derived from former attempts, it shall appear clear that it would be of no avail to send it.

Before I close this letter, permit me to request the favor of you to embrace some favorable occasion to thank Lord Grenville in my behalf, for his politeness in causing a special permit to be sent to Liverpool for the shipment of two sacks of field peas, and the like quantity of winter vetches, which I had requested our consul at that place to send me for seed, but which it seems could not be done without an order from government; a circumstance which did not occur to me, or I certainly should not have given the trouble of issuing one for such a trifle. With very great esteem, I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 9 June, 1796.

SIR,

The instructions for Mr. King, herewith returned, appear to me to be proper. To them, however, I think might be added a desire, that he should attempt to remove any doubts, which may arise in the construction of the article relative to our trade with the East Indies; and to get relieved, if it be practicable, from the restrictions on our vessels going from thence with their cargoes to China.

I shall not impede the forwarding of the other instructions to the accomptant for the British spoliations, as they are now drawn. At the same time, I cannot forbear observing, that I think five hundred pounds

sterling would have been ample compensation for such a character.

First, because no such officer was conceived to be necessary by the negotiators of the treaty, nor provided for in the estimate to Congress.

Secondly, because, among other inducements to the appointment of Mr. Gore, his supposed knowledge of commerce was one, a legal and commercial character being deemed necessary for the purposes of the commission. Why, then, it may be asked, seek for the latter character in an accomptant of *new creation*, uncontemplated by the treaty? And this question, more than probably, will be accompanied with the charge of favoritism to the wishes of the person designated and his friends.

And thirdly, because our secretaries of legation are not allowed half of what is proposed to be given as compensation to the accomptant. I am, &c.*

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 24 June, 1796.

SIR,

The information contained in a letter, of which the enclosed is a correct copy, with a reservation only of names agreeably to the request of the writer, may serve as a comment upon the conduct of the owner of the privateer *Flying-Fish*, and as a developement also of the intentions of the French government, so far as it relates to the commerce of the United States with Great Britain. The communications in the last number of the *Aurora*, that I have seen, afford still further

* The President left Philadelphia for Mount Vernon on the 13th of June, and did not return till the 21st of August.

evidence of this system, and are calculated most evidently to prepare the public mind for this event, at the same time that they labor to make it appear, that the treaty with that country is the cause of such conduct in France.

The source from whence the information comes cannot, as to its authenticity and knowledge of facts, be doubted; of course, if the persons through whom it has passed to the reciter are not mistaken in their details, the most entire credit is to be given to the account.

Under these impressions, and the serious aspect which they present, it is my request that you and the Secretaries of the Treasury and War would meet; consult the treaties, the laws of nations, and of the United States, which have any relation to the subject; and, after mature deliberation, report to me your opinions of the measures, which you conceive ought to be adopted under such information and circumstances particularly.

First, whether immediate explanation should be asked on this subject from the minister of the French Republic in Philadelphia; and in that case, which I am inclined to think is right, to proceed, without the delay of sending to me, to make the requisition accordingly, unless, from the tenor of the answer to the letter you had drafted before I left Philadelphia respecting the capture of the *Mount Vernon*, it should in your judgments be unnecessary.

Secondly, whether there is power in the executive, and, in that case, whether it would be expedient in the recess of the Senate, to send an extra character to Paris to explain the views of this government, and to ascertain those of France; and, in the affirmative of these, to suggest for my consideration the names of

such persons as in your opinions are best qualified to subserve these purposes.

I shall expect to hear fully from you on this interesting subject, and shall only add, that if, in the investigation of it, my presence in Philadelphia is deemed necessary, or if any other occurrence should require my return before the time I had allotted for it, I can and will set out for that place as soon as I am advertised of the necessity. I am, &c.*

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 1 July, 1796.

SIR,

Your letter of the 27th ultimo by post, with its enclosures, the originals of which I return, came duly to hand by the post of Wednesday; and your other letters of the 27th and 28th, by express, were received about five o'clock yesterday afternoon.†

The accounts brought in the letter are very pleasing indeed, inasmuch as they will serve to remove the doubts of the credulous with respect to the western posts; and, when realized, will be productive of that

---

* See the joint answer of the several members of the cabinet, advising Mr. Monroe's recall from France, in the APPENDIX, No. V.

† The Secretary's letter of the 28th gave an account of the reception, which Major Lewis met with from the governor of Canada when he arrived in Quebec with despatches relative to the execution of that part of the treaty, which concerned the western posts. The Secretary writes; "Major Lewis says he was treated with much civility by Lord Dorchester's family, and that the people seemed everywhere pleased with the prospect of a friendly intercourse with our citizens. Lord Dorchester was particular in his inquiries respecting your health, and seemed pleased to learn that you were well and looked well. I believe his Lordship is himself about seventy. Major Lewis could have dined out for a month at Quebec. The first toast was, *The King of Great Britain*; the second invariably, *The President*."

tranquillity and peace with the Indians, which in themselves are so desirable, and have been so much wished and sought for by every real friend to this country.

It is my desire, that the charges exhibited against General Wayne by Brigadier Wilkinson, with the letters of crimination on both sides, should be laid before the heads of departments; and your and their opinions reported to me on the measures necessary to be pursued to do justice to the public, the accused, and the accuser; as also when and by whom the inquiry is to be made, with the preliminary steps necessary thereto.

There are no officers, I conceive, of sufficient rank to constitute a court-martial before whom the commander-in-chief can be brought. Is the matter then to come before Congress? In what manner? My first impressions relative to this business, though not maturely or distinctly formed, are, that General Wayne ought immediately to be furnished with a copy of all the charges exhibited against him by the Brigadier, in order that, as many of them are of old standing, he may have time given him to recollect circumstances, and to see what satisfactory explanations can be given, that he may not be unprepared for trial whenever he is called upon.

It may be well, if it can be accomplished by civil expressions, to stimulate the present governor of Tennessee to an *effectual* repression of encroachments on Indian territory, secured to them by treaty; but the honor of the government and the peace of the Union require, that, if he is not decisive, the laws relative thereto shall not be suspended or trifled with, but, with temper and prudence, promptly and energetically enforced.

I will not speak upon the new model of the army now, but will take more time to consider the scheme

for resolving the legion into four regiments, on the plan you have suggested.

In speaking of Generals Wayne and Wilkinson, I omitted to add, as my opinion, that the latter, if leave has not been given already, ought to receive the furlough he has asked as soon as the former joins the army; for no good will result from both being with it at the same time in the irritable temper they are in.

I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 4 July, 1796.

SIR,

The Spanish minister, M. de Yrujo, spent two days with me, and is just gone. I caused it to be intimated to him, that, as I should be absent from the seat of the government until the middle or latter end of August, I was ready to receive his letter of credence at this place. He answered, as I understood it, that his credentials were with his baggage on its passage to Philadelphia, and that his reception at that place, at the time mentioned, would be perfectly convenient and agreeable to himself. He is a young man, very free and easy in his manners, professes to be well-disposed towards the United States, and, as far as a judgment can be formed on so short an acquaintance, appears to be well-informed.

Enclosed are two letters from the governor of Pennsylvania, applying for the aid of the general government to execute effectually the quarantine he had proclaimed. I left Philadelphia under an impression, that circular letters had been written by the Secretary of the Treasury to the collectors of the different ports,

and by the Secretary of War to the officers commanding the garrisons on the sea-board, to pay proper attention to the act of Congress relative to quarantine.

From the application of Governor Mifflin the presumption is, that there has been an omission somewhere. Let me desire that you and the other two gentlemen would meet and see where it lies, that a remedy may be immediately applied. And I request that you will acknowledge the receipt of the Governor's letters, and inform him of what is or will be done.

I desire to be informed also, if any thing is or can be done relative to the appointment of an Indian agent in place of Governor Blount, and others for carrying on the trade authorized by Congress with those people. I am, &c.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Mount Vernon, 4 July, 1796.

SIR,

Your letter of the 28th ultimo, with its enclosures, was received by the mail on Friday. I wanted no delay in the commissioning of Mr. John Davis to be attorney for the district of Massachusetts, if you, or those who were better acquainted with his profes sional knowledge before he embarked in the controllership, than I am, thought him competent to the duties thereof.

That an entire section of a bill, which had passed both houses of Congress, should be omitted in copying it, and that such omission should have escaped the committee of enrolment, is a circumstance so singular in its nature as scarcely to have a parallel. Being

desirous, however, of carrying the *intentions* of the legislature into effect, I have, though I confess not willingly, endeavoured to supply the defect by the executive act, which is herewith enclosed. The consequences, that might result from delay, have produced this act on my part; otherwise, as its operation is to be exterior, I should have hesitated longer before the signature was given, if at all.

By the last mail I received a letter from the governor of Pennsylvania, requesting "that I would direct such coöperative measures on the part of the officers of the United States, as may effectually counteract the danger, which is apprehended from vessels holding an intercourse with the shores of New Jersey, in evasion of the quarantine prescribed under the authority of the laws of this State." I supposed, from what passed previous to my leaving Philadelphia, that circular orders had issued long since to the collectors of the different ports, and to the officers commanding the fortifications of our harbours, to afford such aid agreeably to the act of Congress relative to quarantine. As there are two letters from the governor on the same subject, I shall send both of them by this day's post to the Secretary of State, and desire, that, if any thing needful remains to be done, orders to that end may issue immediately. I am, &c.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Mount Vernon, 6 July, 1796.

SIR,

When the letter herewith enclosed, dated the 4th instant, was written in answer to yours of the 28th

ultimo, part of it, as you will perceive, was dictated under the impression of much hesitation and doubt; for I am not fond of rectifying legislative mistakes by executive acts. I determined, however, to take the Attorney-General's opinion on the case, resolving, if it accorded with those which had been sent to me, to give the act you forwarded my signature.

For this purpose I requested, that his opinion might be fully stated to me in writing, and delivered at Alexandria on the 4th; where I had promised to be at the celebration of the anniversary of Independence, that I might by the post of next day, or rather the mail of that evening, if his opinion had not a tendency to increase my own doubts, forward the act to you. Knowing that neither time nor opportunity would be allowed at a crowded meeting to write, I prepared my letter in the morning before I left home, on the supposition of a concurrence, and, in that case, that I might have nothing to do but to sign and enclose the act; but, his opinion being adverse to this (as you will see by the enclosure, which I request may be returned to me), I declined doing it, and have desired him to draft something anew. This, when it comes to hand (which I expected would have been in time by this day's post), shall be sent. I am, &c.

TO THOMAS JEFFERSON.

Mount Vernon, 6 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

When I inform you, that your letter of the 19th ultimo * went to Philadelphia and returned to this place

---

* See this letter in JEFFERSON'S *Writings*, Vol. III. p. 330.

before it was received by me, it will be admitted, I am persuaded, as an apology for my not having acknowledged the receipt of it sooner.

If I had entertained any suspicions before, that the queries, which have been published in Bache's paper, proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary would have removed them; but the truth is, I harboured none. I am at no loss to conjecture from what source they flowed, through what channel they were conveyed, and for what purpose they and similar publications appear. They were known to be in the hands of Mr. Parker in the early part of the last session of Congress. They were shown about by Mr. Giles during the session, and they made their public exhibition about the close of it.

Perceiving and probably hearing, that no abuse in the gazettes would induce me to take notice of anonymous publications against me, those, who were disposed to do me *such friendly offices*, have embraced without restraint every opportunity to weaken the confidence of the people; and, by having the whole game in their hands, they have scrupled not to publish things that do not, as well as those which do exist, and to mutilate the latter, so as to make them subserve the purposes which they have in view.

As you have mentioned the subject yourself, it would not be frank, candid, or friendly to conceal, that your conduct has been represented as derogating from that opinion I had conceived you entertained of me; that, to your particular friends and connexions you have described, and they have denounced, me as a person under a dangerous influence; and that, if I would listen more to some other opinions, all would be well. My answer invariably has been, that I had never discovered any thing in the conduct of Mr. Jefferson to

raise suspicions in my mind of his insincerity; that, if he would retrace my public conduct while he was in the administration, abundant proofs would occur to him, that truth and right decisions were the sole objects of my pursuit; that there were as many instances within his own knowledge of my having decided *against* as *in favor* of the opinions of the person evidently alluded to; and, moreover, that I was no believer in the infallibility of the politics or measures of any man living. In short, that I was no party man myself, and the first wish of my heart was, if parties did exist, to reconcile them.

To this I may add, and very truly, that, until within the last year or two, I had no conception that parties would or even could go the length I have been witness to; nor did I believe until lately, that it was within the bounds of probability, hardly within those of possibility, that, while I was using my utmost exertions to establish a national character of our own, independent, as far as our obligations and justice would permit, of every nation of the earth, and wished, by steering a steady course, to preserve this country from the horrors of a desolating war, I should be accused of being the enemy of one nation, and subject to the influence of another; and, to prove it, that every act of my administration would be tortured, and the grossest and most insidious misrepresentations of them be made, by giving one side only of a subject, and that too in such exaggerated and indecent terms as could scarcely be applied to a Nero, a notorious defaulter, or even to a common pickpocket. But enough of this. I have already gone further in the expression of my feelings than I intended.*

* No correspondence after this date between Washington and Jefferson appears in the letter-books, except a brief note the month following

Mrs. Washington begs you to accept her best wishes, and with very great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO CHARLES LEE, ATTORNEY-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 6 July, 1796.

Sir,

Having shown to you the answer of the French minister to the communication of the Secretary of State, relative to the capture of the ship *Mount Vernon* by the French privateer *Flying-Fish*, having read to you, also, the contents of a letter from S——, respecting information from St. Domingo, of the intended measures of the French government to harass our commerce with Great Britain, and also my letter to the Secretary of State on that subject, to which I have by the last mail received the enclosed acknowledgment, let me now ask what you think of the opinion therein given respecting the recall of our minister at Paris? Whether that act would authorize the appointment of an envoy extraordinary, or a minister plenipotentiary? Whether it be, in that case, expedient to do it under present circumstances, so far as they are known, or wait a further developement of his conduct, and the views of the Directory of France? And, in case it should be judged expedient to send a person to Paris to explain the motives of the con-

upon an unimportant matter. It has been reported and believed, that letters or papers, supposed to have passed between them, or to relate to their intercourse with each other at subsequent dates, were secretly withdrawn from the archives of Mount Vernon after the death of the former. Concerning this fact, no positive testimony remains, either for or against it, among Washington's papers as they came into my hands.

duct of this government, and to ascertain the views of that, whether you think either of the characters mentioned in the Secretary of State's letter would go? Would Dr. McClurg go? And does he possess fit abilities, if he would accept?

Answer all these queries as soon as you conveniently can; and let me have the draft you promised on Monday last, for the purpose of supplying the deficiency in the act for the relief of seamen.

Make frequent inquiries for a fit character to fill the office of surveyor-general. I wish much to have it ably executed. I am, &c.*

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 8 July, 1796.

SIR,

My letters to the Secretary of the Treasury, of the 4th and 6th instant, with the present enclosure, convey fully the sentiments of the Attorney-General with respect to the best mode of executing the act "for the relief and protection of American seamen." He has, since his opinion was transmitted in the above letter of the 6th, consulted two of our most eminent lawyers in these parts, and finds an entire accordance of opinion. I request, therefore, that the measure recommended may be pursued.

Your letters of the 1st and 2d instant, with several enclosures in the latter, came safe and duly to hand. After that serious consideration, which the subject deserves, I have determined to recall the American minister at Paris, and am taking measures to supply his

* See the Attorney-General's answer in the APPENDIX, No. V.

place; but, the more the latter is revolved, the greater the difficulties appear of doing it ably and unexceptionably. By this I mean the selecting of one, who will promote, not thwart, the neutral policy of the government, and at the same time will not be obnoxious to the people among whom he is sent.

Proofs little short of positive are already in my possession, that neither Mr. Henry nor Mr. Marshall would accept of such an appointment. The chances against General Pinckney's doing it are strong, though not quite so great; and, with respect to Mr. Smith, although it would be a very agreeable choice to me, I am sure it would not concentre those opinions, which policy would require. Mr. Carroll of Carrollton, though sensible and attached to federal measures, would find himself on quite new ground, and, besides, he has such large concerns of his own to attend to, and is so tenacious of them, that it is morally certain he would not be prevailed on to go.

Having taken this view of the subject, I am by this day's post writing to General Pinckney. This letter I shall enclose to Mr. Marshall (as he is in the line, Mr. Henry being much out of it), to be forwarded, or returned, as he shall decide with respect to himself. In the mean time, as the offer ends with General Pinckney, other characters should be held in contemplation in case of his refusal.

The letter to the minister plenipotentiary of France in Philadelphia appears to be well conceived, and is accordingly approved. I am, &c.

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 8 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

In confidence I inform you, that it has become indispensably necessary to recall our minister at Paris, and to send one in his place, who will explain faithfully the views of this government, and ascertain those of France.

Nothing would be more pleasing to me, than that you should be this organ, if it were only for a temporary absence of a few months; but, it being feared, that even this could not be made to comport with your present pursuits, I have, in order that as little delay as possible may be incurred, put the enclosed letter under cover, to be forwarded to its address, if you decline the present offer, or to be returned to me if you accept it. Your own correct knowledge of circumstances renders details unnecessary. I shall only add, therefore, that I am, dear Sir, &c.*

---

* *Mr. Marshall's Reply.* — "Sir; I will not attempt to express those sensations, which your letter of the 8th instant has increased. Was it possible for me in the present crisis of my affairs to leave the United States, such is my conviction of the importance of that duty, which you would confide to me, and (pardon me if I add) of the fidelity with which I should attempt to perform it, that I would certainly forego any consideration not decisive with respect to future fortunes, and would surmount that just diffidence I have ever entertained of myself, to make an effort to convey truly and faithfully to the government of France those sentiments, which I have ever believed to be entertained by that of the United States.

"I have forwarded your letter to Mr. Pinckney. The recall of our minister at Paris has been conjectured, while its probable necessity has been regretted by those, who love more than all others our own country. I will certainly do myself the honor of waiting on you at Mount Vernon. With every sentiment of respect and attachment, I am, &c." — *Richmond, July 11th.*

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Private and Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 8 July, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

The situation of affairs, and the interests of this country, as they relate to France, render it indispensably necessary, that a faithful organ near that government, able and willing to explain its views and to ascertain those of France, should immediately fill the place of our present minister plenipotentiary at Paris.

Policy requires that this character, to be essentially serviceable, should be well attached to the government of his own country, and not obnoxious to the one to which he is sent. Where then can a man be found, that would answer this description better than yourself?

It is a fact too notorious to be denied, that the greatest embarrassments, under which the administration of this government labors, proceed from the counteraction of people among ourselves, who are more disposed to promote the views of another nation, than to establish a national character of their own; and that, unless the virtuous and independent men of this country will come forward, it is not difficult to predict the consequences. Such is my decided opinion.

After what has passed between us on former occasions, respecting your filling some of the important offices in our government, I must confess, that I hesitated before I resolved on this address, lest you might think I was too importunate, and that your former answer ought to have superseded the desire of making it.

Had not the case been important and urgent, I might have hesitated longer; but, in finding a character of the description I have mentioned, you will be at no loss to perceive the difficulty which occurs. He must

be a man, whose abilities and celebrity of character are well known to the people of this country, whose honor and integrity are unimpeached, and who ought, as far as the nature of the case will admit, to be acceptable to all parties. Doubtless many such there are; but those, who have been either in the executive or legislative departments of the general government, and are best known to me, have been so decisive in their politics, and possibly so frank and public in their declarations, as to render it very difficult to choose from among them one, in whom the confidence of this country could be placed, and the prejudices of the others not excited.

Thus, my good Sir, you have a candid exposition of my sentiments and wishes. I have only to add to them a request, that you would be so obliging as to give me a prompt answer, and, if in the affirmative, that you would repair to Philadelphia, prepared to proceed on the mission with as little delay as may be. Possibly you might have less objection to the excursion, if it would occasion a few months' absence only, than to a permanent residence; but the power of the executive, in the recess of the Senate, extends only to the filling of vacancies; and one will be occasioned by the recall of the present incumbent, a measure resolved on. It is unnecessary to add how much and how sincerely I am, dear Sir, &c.*

---

* *Mr. Pinckney's Reply.* — "Dear Sir; Duplicates of your two favors of the 8th of July I received this morning. The originals are not yet arrived. Though my affairs have not hitherto been arranged as I could wish them, the manner in which you state our political situation, and the interests of this country as they relate to France, oblige me to accept your appointment without hesitation. I am only apprehensive, that your friendship has been too partial to the little merit I may possess, and that the matters intrusted to me may fail through my want of ability. You may however depend, that what talent I have shall be

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 13 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

The purport of your private letter of the 7th instant, that part of it I mean which relates to the frigate for the regency of Algiers, has surprised me exceedingly.

That no step yet should have been taken to carry this measure into vigorous execution, and that it should be asked, nearly six weeks after it had been resolved to comply with the Dey's request, and an actual stipulation of our agent or agents there, by what department it is to be carried into effect, is, on account of the delay which has been occasioned (if contrary to the ideas which have been communicated to the Dey and Colonel Humphreys), extremely unpleasant.

Disagreeable as this requisition was found in its reception, and more so in the compliance with it, yet, as there appeared no other alternative but to comply, or submit to the depredations of the Barbary corsairs on our citizens and commerce, the former was preferred; and I had no doubt, after pressing as often and as earnestly as I did before I left Philadelphia, that all matters requiring my opinions or acts might be laid before me, that every thing relative to this frigate was in a perfect train of execution, agreeably to whatever assurances had been given by Captain O'Brien.

---

diligently exercised in performing the objects of my mission, and in promoting, as far as I can, the honor and interest of our country.

* "I will endeavour to arrange my affairs in a fortnight or three weeks and shall then proceed with Mrs. Pinckney by the first vessel for Philadelphia, where I hope to return you thanks in person for all your kindness to me, and to assure you that I always am, with the sincerest regard and the highest veneration, esteem, and attachment, &c."—*Charleston, July 27th.*

If the laws establishing the different departments (I have them not by me) do not expressly or by analogy designate the one to which the care of such business is intrusted, I must, no doubt, assign it; but, where these speak, it is best for me to be silent.*

If the building of this vessel could have been suspended until the meeting of Congress, for the agency of the Senate, the answer to the Dey might have been suspended also. But to avert, if possible, the disagreeable consequences of delay, a prompt decision was come to, and Captain O'Brien hurried off with the result. This decision, and the letters which he carried, ought to be resorted to, and the measures accorded thereto strictly.

Whether it will be best to purchase a ship ready built, if one fit for the purpose can be had (and such a one on the stocks at Philadelphia was talked of); whether to contract for the building and equipping of one, some of the materials being found, if entire confidence can be placed in the undertaker; or whether to furnish the materials, in which case all that can be spared from our own frigates ought unquestionably to

* As yet there was no navy department, and the respective duties of the secretaries in regard to naval affairs seem not to have been clearly defined. The Secretary of the Treasury had written; "I do not wish to have new duties assigned to me; but, if matters relative to vessels of war belong to the department of war (of which you will judge in looking over the laws instituting the several departments), it might possibly give rise to remarks, were it to be assigned to a different one. Should you think, however, that it comes more properly within the duties of the department of state, than that of war, I shall be perfectly satisfied. I do not know that Mr. Pickering has formed any opinion on this question, or that it has even occurred to him; and I do not wish it to pass beyond yourself, that I have suggested any doubt on the subject; because it would look (which is very remote from the truth) as if I was either desirous to have the management of the building, or was jealous of encroachments on the department." — *Philadelphia, July 7th.*

be applied, and pay for the building, depends upon inquiries not within my power at this time and place to make, and must, therefore, be a matter of investigation and consultation among yourselves, especially with the Secretary of the Treasury as to the means.

Before I conclude, let me in a friendly way impress the following maxims upon the executive officers. In all important matters, to deliberate maturely, but to execute promptly and vigorously; and not to put things off until to-morrow, which can be done and require to be done to-day. Without an adherence to these rules, business never will be well done, or done in an easy manner, but will always be in arrear, with one thing treading upon the heels of another. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 15 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 11th instant, and regret, that present circumstances should deprive our country of the services, which I am confident your going to France at this time would have rendered it.

It is difficult to fill some offices with characters, who would fit them in all respects. Another case of this sort is now before me, namely, that of surveyor-general. A gentleman well qualified to discharge the duties of this office was appointed, but has declined accepting it. Several others have been mentioned, but the recommendations of them have gone more to the general respectability of their characters, than to their scientific knowledge, whilst both are equally essential.

For it is a trust, which in the execution requires skill to arrange, instruct, inspect, and report correctly the conduct of others, and integrity to resist the temptation, which opportunities and an overweening fondness for speculating in lands may throw in his way.

Among the characters from the State of Virginia, who have been presented to my view on this occasion, are Generals Wood and Posey, and Colonels Tinsley and Anderson. The last of whom is, I believe, an inhabitant of Kentucky; and, having been in that line, the presumption ought to be, that his mathematical knowledge, which should extend beyond common surveying, is adequate to the duties which would be required. But of his qualifications in other respects, and what may be the course of his politics, I know nothing; and but little of those of the other three, particularly of Tinsley's.

The object, therefore, of writing this letter to you is, to ask confidentially such information as you possess, or can acquire and give me, respecting the qualifications of these gentlemen, or of any other fit character that may occur to you for surveyor-general, accordant with the ideas I have expressed above. The office is important and respectable. Of course the incumbent, besides his scientific abilities, should possess a celebrity of character, that would justify the appointment.

To learn your sentiments of the characters, and on the points I have mentioned, will be in time when I shall have the pleasure of seeing you on your way to Philadelphia. With very great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 18 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

If there be any thing yet to do, which can be done with propriety towards fulfilling the several treaties, which the United States have entered into, without specially naming them, it is my desire, that there may be no delay in the execution; and if, upon examining them carefully, any matter should be found therein requiring the attention of either of the other departments, that these sentiments may be conveyed to the secretaries thereof, as proceeding immediately from myself.

The new requisition of the Dey of Algiers, which has been yielded, will require to be laid before the Senate for its ratification, together with such papers as are necessary to explain and account for the measure. It might be well, therefore, to revise and prepare them accordingly in time.

The continual attacks, which have been made and are still making on the administration, in Bache's and other papers of that complexion, as indecent as they are void of truth and fairness, under different signatures, and at present exhibited under that of PAULDING, charging it with not only unfriendly but even unjust conduct towards France, and, to prove it, resorting to misrepresentation and mutilated authorities, and oftentimes to unfounded and round assertions, or to assertions founded on principles, which apply to all the belligerent powers, but by them represented as aimed at France alone, — make it to be wished, that the enlightened public could have a clear and comprehensive view of facts. But how to give it is the difficulty; and I see no method at present, however

desirable the measure, that is not liable to objections, unless the predicted and threatened conduct of France towards this country, under pretext of our treaty with Great Britain, or its demands that the guarantee of their West India Islands, agreeably to the treaty of Paris, should be fulfilled, present the occasion.

Whether either of these will or will not happen, or whether any other mode may occur, which, after mature consideration, shall appear expedient or not, I wish that in your moments of leisure, if such you have, you would go most carefully and *critically* over the whole of the correspondence between the different Secretaries of State and the French minister in this country, and with our own minister at Paris, from the period matters began to change from their ancient habits, and to assume their new form in that country. If circumstances should render explanations of this sort expedient and necessary for Congress, a previous examination of the papers with notes and remarks will be essential. If they should not, the measure nevertheless will be satisfactory and useful. I would have the whole of the transactions, in all their direct and collateral relations, examined with as critical an eye as Mr. Bache or any of his numerous correspondents would do; that, if there is any thing in them, not recollected by me, that can be tortured into an unfriendly disposition towards France, and not required by the neutral policy adopted by the executive, approved by the people, and sanctioned by the legislature, or which the peace, honor, and safety of this country did not require, I may be apprized of it, as my conviction of the contrary is strong.

I request, also, that you will begin to note down all the subjects as they may occur, which may be proper to communicate to Congress at their next meeting,

either at the opening of the session, or by separate messages in the course of it. Many things are forgotten, when the recollection of them is postponed until the period at which they are wanted. Minute details will not be amiss, because a selection will at all times be easier to make than a collection.

I am, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 18 July, 1796.

SIR,

Your letters of the 10th, 12th, and 13th instant, with their enclosures, came all to hand by the last mail to Alexandria, and were received by me on Saturday morning. The contents of such parts as require it shall be noticed.

The greatest, and what appears to me to be an insuperable difficulty in the way of running and marking the boundary line between the United States and the Cherokee tribe of Indians the ensuing autumn, which is certainly the most agreeable season for a work of this sort, is, that no commissioners are or can be appointed to superintend the same till the meeting of the Senate, which, unless extra causes should render it expedient, will not happen before the first Monday in December. This circumstance, in addition to the reason assigned in your letters, renders a postponement of this measure until next year unavoidable. But, that it may not be delayed beyond a convenient time in the spring, the Indians may be requested to come instructed to arrange matters for carrying the measures into effect at that period. Their interest, and the tranquillity of our frontiers, require that this line should

not only be run, with the least delay possible, but be very distinctly marked also, that ignorance may no longer be offered as a plea for transgressions on either side; and it may be ascertained in the interim whether General Pickens will serve as a commissioner.

I hope and expect, that the proposed visit from the Cherokee chiefs will be so managed, as not to take place before the month of November. I have already been incommoded at this place by a visit of several days from a party of a dozen Catawbas, and should wish, while I am in this retreat, to avoid a repetition of such guests. The reason why I name November is, that, between the middle and latter end of August, I shall repair to the seat of government, remain there until between the middle and last of September, and then return to this place again for my family.

The extract, which you enclosed in your letter of the 10th from the Secretary of the Treasury, declaring his inability to furnish money for carrying on commerce with the Indian tribes, renders the appointment of agents for that purpose at present altogether improper; and, whether the act, "To regulate Trade and Intercourse with the Indian Tribes, and to preserve Peace on the Frontiers," does or does not go fully to the points, which are enumerated in your letter of the 12th, there seems under existing circumstances no expedient so proper for executing the requisitions of the above act, and the duties enjoined on the late superintendent of Indian affairs in the southwestern territory, (which have become stagnant by the admission of it as a State into the Union,) as by applying the services, under temporary regulations and proper instructions, of Colonel Henley or Mr. Dinsmore, or both, as the case shall, after duly considering it, appear to

require. But, if this expedient is resorted to, Mr. Dinsmore ought to return immediately.

My ideas, with respect to the most eligible mode of procuring the thirty-six-gun frigate, have already in a former letter been conveyed to you; and your instructions to Mr. Fox do, I perceive, accord therewith; but, lest I may not perfectly understand another part of them, which relates to the timber and plank (both of which certainly come under the description of perishable articles) in the act discontinuing three of the frigates, and directing such of the materials as are perishable to be sold, I shall give it as my decisive opinion, that all wood not necessary for the retained frigates and the one wanted for Algiers, except the large pieces which have been obtained with difficulty and at a heavy expense, and which would not answer for ordinary vessels and would sell for little, ought to be sold, agreeably to the directions of the aforesaid act. If it is reserved, secured from the weather, and persons employed to take care of it, the expense and imposition will exceed all calculation, and it will be wasted or embezzled notwithstanding. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 25 July, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Was Colonel Monroe requested to engage a cannon-founder in behalf of the United States? If so, on what terms? To remove a person with his family will be attended with considerable expense, and, unless with condition to secure his services, it will be done under great uncertainty. With respect to the

engineers, policy requires a further developement of the unfavorable disposition, with which we are threatened, before any encouragement ought to be given to the measure. But, even if that objection was fully removed, there are no funds, within my recollection, that would enable the executive to incur the expense. Therefore, as a law must precede any executive act, the answer to the query is quite easy and plain.

I am glad to find, that more smoke than fire is likely to result from the representation of French discontents on account of our treaty with Great Britain. Had the case been otherwise, there would have been no difficulty in tracing the effect to the cause; and it is far from being impossible, that the whole may have originated in a contrivance of the opposers of the government, to see what effect such threats would work; and, finding none that could answer their purpose, and no safe ground to stand on, if they pushed matters to extremity, the affair may terminate in gasconade. Be this as it may, the executive has a plain road to pursue, namely, to fulfil all the engagements, which its duty requires; be influenced beyond this by none of the contending parties; maintain a strict neutrality, unless obliged by imperious circumstances to depart from it; do justice to all, and never forget that we are Americans, the remembrance of which will convince us, that we ought not to be French or English. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 25 July, 1796.

SIR,

If the answer, which you returned to the minister of the French Republic to his inquiry relative to the

prohibition of the sale of prizes brought by French armed vessels into the ports of the United States, should, as it ought, preclude any reply, it would be very agreeable; but it has not been found, that, where the interest or convenience of that nation is at stake, the minister thereof can be satisfied with reasons, however cogent, which are opposed to their views. But in this case, as in all others, the executive must be governed by the constitution and laws, and, preserving good faith and an unbiassed conduct, leave the rest to the good sense of our own citizens, and the justice of the nations with whom we have intercourse.

As it has been resolved, for political considerations, to put an American citizen as consul at Hamburg in place of Mr. Parish, it is fortunate that so eligible a character as Mr. Samuel Williams of Salem presents himself, and I desire he may be commissioned accordingly, and advice thereof, as mere matter of information, given among other communications which may be made to Mr. Monroe. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 27 July, 1796.

SIR,

Your two letters, both bearing date the 21st instant,* with their enclosures, were received by the last mail to Alexandria. It would have been unfortunate, and much indeed to be regretted, if the French government had had as great cause of complaint against the conduct of the United States, as they have shown disposition to complain. It was natural to expect, though it was not easy to conceive on what ground,

* See APPENDIX, No. VI.

that the French discontents, which had been so often announced, accompanied with such terrific threatenings chiefly by anonymous writers, would, in the formal exhibition of them, under the authority of the Directory by their minister of foreign affairs, have had something serious, formidable, and embarrassing in their appearance. Instead of which, most if not all the charges seem to have originated either in a misrepresentation, or want of attention to treaties and the laws of nations, or in the want of a just and timely representation of facts, with accompanying explanations, which our minister near the French government had it in his power, and was directed, to make.

Presuming that Mr. Van Polanen is regularly credited by the proper authority of the existing government of the United Netherlands, I see no cause, accordant with the principles which have actuated the government of the United States, why, when I return to Philadelphia, he should not be received as the minister resident from that country. And, if no objection unknown to me should occur to you, Mr. Van Polanen may be so informed. My arrival there will be by the 1st of September.

Instructions from the treasury department to the collectors, relative to the mode of obtaining passports by American seamen, will certainly be as effectual, and probably is as proper, as if they had issued from the department of state, and this was my opinion to the Attorney-General. But he observed, first, that it was not in any degree connected with the revenue of the country; and, secondly, that there were some other provisions in the law, I do not now recollect of what nature, that required the agency of the department of state. I am satisfied, however, with the circular which

has been adopted, as the design will be equally well answered by it.

The original papers, forwarded with your last despatches, are herewith returned. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 1 August, 1796.

Sir,

Your letters of the 26th and 27th ultimo were received by the post on Friday last. Forwarding without further direction the commission appointing Mr. Davis attorney for the district of Massachusetts, in place of Mr. Otis, after satisfactorily ascertaining those points, which had occasioned the hesitation, was perfectly conformable to my intentions.

I rejoice to find, by the account you have given of the contents of the despatches from Colonel Humphreys, that there is a probability of the speedy release of our captives in Algiers, that the Dey had recovered his temper, and that Mr. Barlow had been received as our consul at that place. The suggestions of that gentleman, relative to the policy and utility of forming commercial and friendly relations with the Italian states, with Austria, and with the Grand Seignior, deserve serious attention; and I not only request you to bestow it, but to ascertain in the best manner you can, against my arrival in Philadelphia, the principles on which such connexions could be advantageously formed. Good measures should always be executed as soon as they are conceived and circumstances will permit.

It has ever been my opinion, from the little I have seen, and from what I have heard of Mr. Barlow, that his abilities are adequate to any employment; and,

improved as they must have been by travel and the political career he has run, there can be little doubt of his fitness as a negotiator for some of the countries above mentioned, with proper instructions.

I am, &c.*

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 8 August, 1796.

SIR,

Your letter of the 3d instant, with the information of our possession of Fort Ontario, lately occupied by the troops of Great Britain, and the correspondence between Captain Bruff of the United States troops, and Captain Clarke of the British, was brought to me by the last post.

Several matters are submitted by the former for consideration; among them, the mode of supplying the garrison with fire-wood, and furnishing it with a seine. With respect to the first of these, providing it with a horse or pair of horses, and a batteau, as the fuel is to be transported so far, seems to be a matter of necessity; but the practice of the American army should be consulted for precedents before the British allowance is made to the soldiers for cutting and transporting it to the fort, when the means by which it is done are furnished by the public. If no allowance of this sort has been made heretofore in towns, where the wood was to be bought, which, if I remember rightly, was the case invariably while I commanded the army,

* Information had been given, in Mr. Pickering's letter, concerning the transactions of Mr. Barlow as consul at Algiers, and certain suggestions made by him in regard to the commercial interests of the United States in the Mediterranean.

it would be a dangerous innovation to begin it now; for it would instantly pervade all the garrisons and the whole army, be their situation what it may. In time of peace, where no danger is to be apprehended, and where the duty is light, I see no hardship in the soldiers providing fuel for their own use and comfort. With regard to a seine, as the expense will be small if it is taken care of, and the convenience great, I think the garrison should be indulged with one.

There is another part of Captain Bruff's letter, which I do not perfectly understand, where he says, "he is at a loss what orders to give Lieutenant Bowen, respecting the continuance of his command, or whether to join him, or stay, on the arrival of a reinforcement or detachment." Doubts of this sort should be removed as soon as possible.

There is a suggestion in Mr. Glen's letter of the 17th of July, which merits consideration. I mean the purchase of a vessel, now in use, on Lake Ontario. The utility of this measure depends very much, if not altogether, upon the cheapest and best channel through which to supply the garrison at Niagara with provisions and stores. If by the route of the Mohawk and Oswego, a proper vessel on Lake Ontario would certainly be useful; if by the way of Presque Isle and Lake Erie, it would be unnecessary; and, if by a middle communication, suggested I think by Mr. Weston to the Canal Company in the State of New York, in some report which has been published, it would depend much upon the place of its entrance into the abovementioned lake for its utility. I am, &c.

TO THE DUKE DE LIANCOURT.

Mount Vernon, 8 August, 1796.

SIR,

The letter, which you did me the honor of writing to me on the 25th of last month, came duly to hand, and the enclosure for Mr. George W. Lafayette was immediately presented to him.

The name and character of the Duke de Liancourt were not unknown to me before his arrival in this country; and the respect which I entertained for the latter (although political considerations have deprived me of the honor of a personal acquaintance with him) was and is as great as he or his warmest friends could desire.

M. de Liancourt must be too well acquainted with the history of governments, with the insidious ways of the world, and with the suspicions and jealousies of its rulers, not to acknowledge, that men in responsible situations cannot, like those in private life, be governed solely by the dictates of their own inclinations, or by such motives as can only affect themselves.

To dilate upon this observation, or to attempt to point at the distinction between the conduct of a man in public office, who is accountable for the consequences of his measures to others, and one in private life, who has no other check than the rectitude of his own actions, would be superfluous to a man of information; but, if exemplification of these facts were necessary, it might be added with truth, that, in spite of all the circumspection with which my conduct has been marked towards the gentlemen of your nation, who have left France under circumstances, which have rendered them obnoxious to the governing power of it, the countenance said to be given to them is alleged

as a cause of discontent in the Directory of France against the government of the United States. But it is not my intention to dwell on this subject. How far the charge is merited, no one better than yourself can judge; and your candor and penetration will, I am persuaded, appreciate my motives for the reverse of the charge, however contrary the operation of them may have been to your expectation or to my wishes.

With respect to M. de Lafayette, I may, without troubling you with the details, venture to affirm, that whatever private friendship could require, or public duty would allow, has been and will continue to be essayed by me to effect his liberation; the difficulty in accomplishing which has no doubt proceeded in a great measure from the cause you have mentioned, and will probably exist while the war between the belligerent powers continues to rage.

No man regrets this, and the present unhappy situation of this amiable family more than I do; but it is an ascertained fact, that, although Lafayette is an adopted citizen of this country, neither the government of it, nor the people themselves, notwithstanding their attachment to his person and the recollection of his services, have any right to demand him as their citizen by the law of nations. Consequently, an expression of their earnest wishes, that liberty may be restored to him, is all they can do towards accomplishing it. To attempt more, would avail him nothing, and might involve the United States in difficulties of great magnitude.

This letter, Sir, you will consider as a private one, originating from yours to me, relatively to M. de Lafayette. In replying to the sentiments contained in it, I could not, from respect to your character, and the indulgence of my own feelings, miss the occasion of

giving you this explanation of matters, which otherwise might have the appearance of mystery. It affords an occasion also of assuring you, that, with sentiments of the highest esteem and greatest respect, I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 10 August, 1796.

SIR,

The last post brought me the enclosed letter from General Pinckney. It becomes necessary now to prepare instructions for him without delay. to bring him fully and perfectly acquainted with the conduct and policy of this government towards France, and the motives which have induced the recall of Mr. Monroe.

As the measure, when known, will excite much speculation, and set all the envenomed pens at work, it is worthy of consideration what part and how much of the causes, which have produced this event, should be spoken of unofficially by the officers of government.

It will be candid, proper, and necessary to apprize Mr. Monroe (as the measure and his successor are decided on) of his recall, and, in proper terms, of the motives which have caused it.

In the course of next week, probably about the middle of it, I expect to commence my journey for Philadelphia; but, as I shall be obliged to halt a day at the Federal City, and from the heat of the season

---

* See the Duke de Liancourt's letter, to which the above is an answer, and other papers relating to Lafayette's imprisonment, in the APPENDIX, No. VII.

and other circumstances must travel slowly, it is not likely I shall arrive there before the middle of the following week. I am, &c.

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Mount Vernon, 10 August, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

With sincere pleasure, I acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, learning by it, that you may be so soon expected with your lady in Philadelphia, to proceed on your mission to France.

If this letter should find you in Charleston, it is intended to express a regret, that my *original* letters had not been received by you; and to ask, if there has been any miscarriage of a mail in the southern quarter, aiming thereby to come at some clew to the discovery of this accident. The sum sent was three hundred dollars, in three bank notes of Columbia. My best respects attend Mrs. Pinckney, and, with affectionate regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

TO JAMES MONROE.

Philadelphia, 25 August, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 24th of March, written in cipher, never got to my hands until the 10th instant at Mount Vernon; nor were the contents of it known to me

* Duplicate copies of the President's letters had been received by Mr. Pinckney before the originals. The money enclosed in one of the original letters was a donation for the sufferers by a recent fire in Charleston.

until my arrival in this city on the 21st. For the information contained in it, and your attention thereto, I offer you my best thanks.

Having no clew by which to discover the fact, I am very much at a loss to conjecture by what means a private letter of mine, written to a friend and sent by an American vessel, should have gotten into the hands of the French Directory. I shall readily acknowledge, however, that the one you allude to, directed to Mr. Gouverneur Morris, was a long and confidential one;* but I deny that there is any thing contained in it, that the French government could take exception to, unless the expression of an ardent wish, that the United States might remain in peace with all the world, taking no part in the disputes of any part of it, should have produced this effect. I also gave it as my further opinion, that the sentiments of the mass of citizens in this country were in unison with mine.

Confidential as this letter was expected to be, I have no objection to its being seen by anybody; and there is some mistake in saying I had no copy thereof, when there is a press one now before me, in which I discover no expression, that in the eye of liberality and candor would be deemed objectionable

To understand the scope and design of my letter properly, and to give it a fair interpretation, it is necessary to observe, that it was written, as will appear by the contents of it, in answer to very long ones from the gentleman to whom it was addressed, which contained much political information of the state of things in different parts of Europe, and related among others the substance of a conversation, in which he and Lord Grenville, as private gentlemen, had just been engaged, and in which it was observed by the latter,

* This letter is printed under the date of December 22d, 1795.

that, if they were to judge from the publications in this country, the disposition of it was unfriendly to Great Britain; but in free countries he could readily account for such publications; however, that there was *one*, which wore a more serious aspect, as indicative of the sense of the government, and he alluded to Colonel Innes's report of his proceedings in Kentucky.

In noticing this part of Mr. Morris's communication, I tell him, that, with respect to the publication of that report, it was an unauthorized act, and declared by that gentleman, as soon as he saw it in the gazettes, to have been done incorrectly; and that, with relation to the temper of the people of the United States, as it respected Great Britain, his Lordship ought not to be surprised, if it appeared disturbed and irritated, after the sense of the government had been so often expressed in strong remonstrances against the conduct of the Indian agents, privateersmen, impressment of our seamen, insults from their ships of war, &c. &c.; adding that it afforded us very little satisfaction, that they disclaimed these as unauthorized acts (which the British administration had done in some instances), while the actors were suffered to go unpunished. I dwelt chiefly and fully on this part of his letter, and reminded him of the indifference with which the advances of the United States to form a commercial treaty with Great Britain, as well since as before the establishment of the present government, had been received; and concluded by saying, that a liberal policy towards us (though I did not suppose sentiments of that sort from me to a member of the British administration would have much weight) was the only road to a perfect reconciliation; and that, if he should again converse with Lord Grenville on this subject, he was at liberty unofficially to express these as my sentiments.

Thus, Sir, you have the substance, candidly related, of a letter, which, you say you have been told by a person "who has read it, has produced an ill effect," when in my opinion the contrary (viewing it in the light of an unreserved and confidential communication) ought to have been produced. For, I repeat it again, unless my pacific disposition was displeasing, nothing else could have given umbrage by the most rigid construction of the letter, or have shown in the remotest degree any disposition on my part to favor the British interests in their dispute with France.

My conduct in public and private life, as it relates to the important struggle in which the latter nation is engaged, has been uniform from the commencement of it, and may be summed up in a few words; that I have always wished well to the French revolution; that I have always given it as my decided opinion, that no nation had a right to intermeddle in the internal concerns of another; that every one had a right to form and adopt whatever government they liked best to live under themselves; and that, if this country could, consistently with its engagements, maintain a strict neutrality and thereby preserve peace, it was bound to do so by motives of policy, interest, and every other consideration, that ought to actuate a people situated as we are, already deeply in debt, and in a convalescent state from the struggle we have been engaged in ourselves.

On these principles I have steadily and uniformly proceeded, bidding defiance to calumnies calculated to sow the seeds of distrust in the French nation, and to excite their belief of an influence possessed by Great Britain in the councils of this country, than which nothing is more unfounded and injurious, the object of its pacific conduct being truly delineated above. I am, &c.

TO JAMES WOOD.

Philadelphia, 12 September, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

By a recurrence to the acts of the last session of Congress, you will find one for disposing of the ungranted lands northwest of the Ohio, and for appointing a surveyor-general for the purposes therein mentioned. And you may have heard, that Mr. De Witt, who was geographer to the army at the close of the war, after the decease of Mr. Erskine, and at present the surveyor-general of the State of New York, a man of profound knowledge in mathematics and sufficiently versed in astronomy, was nominated to that office, and has declined the acceptance of it.

It is yet vacant, and you have been mentioned to me as a gentleman to whom it might be acceptable. Without taking then a circuitous route to ascertain this fact, I shall apply immediately to yourself for information, and will frankly ask, because I am sure you will candidly answer, if the appointment should meet your wishes, whether a knowledge of mathematics, practical surveying, and so much of astronomy as is useful to a skilful exercise of the latter, for discovering the latitude, meridian, &c., now are, or easily can be made familiar to you.

These questions are propounded, because positive qualifications are essential; for it will readily occur to you, that he who is to examine and employ others, direct their proceedings, and inspect their works, ought not to be ignorant of the principles, which are to be the rule for their conduct.

It is a very honorable and important office. There is none, perhaps, that requires more integrity and vigilance in the execution, to prevent improper speculation

and abuse. The officer holding it must reside in the country where the business will be chiefly transacted.

As the season and circumstances begin now to press for an appointment, and as my continuance here, and the road I shall travel back to Virginia for the purpose of returning with my family for the winter, are uncertain, I request the favor of you to put your answer to this letter under cover to the Secretary of State, who will be directed to open it and to fill up the blank commission, which I shall deposit in his office, with your name, if you are disposed to accept it, or with that of another, who is held in contemplation, if you do not. You may, if not too troublesome, address a duplicate to me at Mount Vernon, to remain in the post-office at Alexandria until called for.

With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Philadelphia, 12 September, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

To open a correspondence with you on so trifling a subject, as that which gives birth to this letter, would hardly be justified, were it not for the singularity of the case. This singularity will, I hope, apologize for the act.

Some time ago, perhaps two or three months, I read in some gazette, but was so little impressed with it at the time (conceiving it to be one of those things, which get into newspapers nobody knows how or why), that I cannot now recollect whether the gazette was of American or foreign production, announcing, that a celebrated artist had presented, or was about to present, to the President of the United States a sword of

masterly workmanship, as an evidence of his veneration, &c.

I thought no more of the matter afterwards, until a gentleman with whom I have no acquaintance, coming from and going to I know not where, at a tavern I never could get information of, came across this sword (for it is presumed to be the same), pawned for thirty dollars, which he paid, left it in Alexandria, nine miles from my house in Virginia, with a person who refunded him the money, and sent the sword to me.

This is all I have been able to learn of this curious affair. The blade is highly wrought, and decorated with many military emblems. It has my name engraved thereon, and the following inscription, translated from the Dutch, "*Condemner of despotism, Preserver of Liberty, glorious Man, take from my Son's hands this Sword, I beg you.* A. SOLLINGEN." The hilt is either gold, or richly plated with that metal, and the whole carries with it the form of a horseman's sword or long sabre.

The matter, as far as it appears at present, is a perfect enigma. How it should have come into this country without a letter, or an accompanying message, how afterwards it should have got into such loose hands, and whither the person having it in possession was steering his course, remain as yet to be explained. Some of these points, probably, can only be explained by the maker, and the maker is no otherwise to be discovered than by the inscription and name, "A. SOLLINGEN," who, from the impression which dwells on my mind, is of Amsterdam.

If, Sir, with this clew you can develope the history of this sword, the value of it, the character of the maker, and his probable object in sending it, you would oblige me; and, by relating these facts to him, might

obviate doubts, which otherwise might be entertained by him of its fate or its reception. With great esteem and regard, I am dear Sir, &c.*

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Private.

Philadelphia, 12 September, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

After furnishing you with the following copies of letters, it is scarcely necessary to add any thing by way of explanation of my motives for doing it. However, I will briefly add, that, from the arrival of Mr. Gouverneur Morris in Europe up to the date of his last letter to me in June of the present year, I have received much interesting and useful information from him respecting the political state of things on the other side of the Atlantic; that, from the multiplicity of business with which I have been overwhelmed continually, I very rarely acknowledged the receipt of his

* When Mr. Adams received this letter he was at the Hague, as minister from the United States in Holland. He made inquiry, and ascertained the particulars about the sword. Meantime General Washington obtained intelligence of the same from a letter written to him by the manufacturer, whose name was Theophilus Alte, and who resided at Sollingen, near Dusseldorf.

It seems that, in the year 1795, a son of Mr. Alte had come to America; and his father sent by him a sword of curious workmanship, made at his own manufactory, and inscribed as above, directing him to present it to the President, as "the only man, whom he knew of, that had acted in a disinterested manner for the happiness of his country." The son arrived in Philadelphia; and, not understanding the language, either through timidity, or for some other cause not known, he did not call on the President with the sword, but sold it at a tavern, and went away without giving notice of the place at which he might be found. More than a year afterwards the father wrote a letter to Washington inquiring about him. The name on the sword was probably meant for *Alte of Sollingen.*

letters; but upon receiving that of the 3d of July, 1795, a copy of which follows, I was struck forcibly with the idea, as well from the style and manner, as from its being confined to a single subject, that it had passed, or was intended to pass, under the eye of Lord Grenville, although no intimation thereof was given to me.

Under this impression, it was natural to suppose, that my answer or the substance of it would also be communicated to that minister. I resolved, therefore, to frame it accordingly, that Lord Grenville might find from that mode, as well as from the ordinary course of official communications, in what light the people of this country viewed the conduct of his towards it.

I little expected, indeed, that a private letter of mine to a friend would have found a place in the bureau of the French Directory. Less should I have suspected, that any exception could or would be taken at the sentiments expressed in the one that has got there. But, as intimations of the contrary have been given in Colonel Monroe's letter, I have thought it expedient to furnish you with all the documents relative thereto, with this short history of the rise and progress of it; that you may be enabled, if more is said on the subject, and occasion should require it, to set the matter right by a plain and simple statement of facts. With great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO ROBERT BROOKE, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Philadelphia, 15 September, 1796.

SIR,

The commonwealth of Virginia having manifested their approbation of my design to apply the hundred shares in the James River Company, which they had

before put at my disposal, to the use of a seminary to be erected in such part of the State as they should deem most proper, and, in consequence of this reference to their opinion, the legislature having requested me to appropriate them to a seminary at such place in the upper country as I should think most convenient to a majority of its inhabitants; after careful inquiries to ascertain that place, I have, upon the fullest consideration of all circumstances, destined those shares to the use of *Liberty Hall Academy* * in Rockbridge county.

It would seem to me proper, that this determination should be promulgated by some official act of the executive of Virginia, and the legislature may expect it for the purpose of general information. With due consideration and respect, I am, Sir, &c.†

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Philadelphia, 5 December, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

My not being able to recollect with certainty, whether I expressed to you my ardent desire, that no favorable occasion might be omitted by you, of signifying how much it was my wish, and the wishes of the people of this country, that that friend to it, M. de Lafayette, could be liberated from his confinement, is the cause of my giving you the trouble of this address.

---

* Since called *Washington College.*

† It may here be mentioned in the order of dates, that the President, having resolved not to be a candidate for a reelection, published his FAREWELL ADDRESS to the people of the United States on the 17th of September. It will be found in the part of this work appropriated to ADDRESSES.

Not in my public character have I conceived myself authorized to move in this business. But, in my private one, I have used and shall continue to use every exertion in my power to effect this much desired object; for, surely, if a hard fate has attended any one, this gentleman has met it.

It would give me much pleasure to hear of your safe arrival, after an agreeable passage, and that your reception from the French Directory has been favorable. Of politics, or on matters of public concern, I shall say nothing; because you are too recently from this country to need information on the first subject, and from the office of State you receive all that can be given on the second. I am, &c.

TO ELIJAH PAINE AND ISAAC TICHENOR, SENATORS IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF VERMONT.

Philadelphia, 12 December, 1796.

GENTLEMEN,

With particular pleasure I receive the unanimous address of the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont. Although but lately admitted into the Union, yet the importance of your State, its love of liberty, and its energy were manifested in the earliest period of the revolution, which established our independence. Unconnected in name only, but in reality united with the confederated States, these felt and acknowledged the benefits of your coöperation. Their mutual safety and advantage, duly appreciated, will never permit this Union to be dissolved.

I enjoy great happiness in the testimony you have presented, and in the other proofs exhibited from various parts of our country, that the operations of the

general government have justified the hopes of our citizens in its formation, which is recognised as the era of national prosperity. The voluntary acknowledgments of my fellow-citizens persuade me to believe, that my agency has contributed to produce that effect. This belief will be to me a source of permanent satisfaction, and those acknowledgments a rich reward.

My sincere thanks are due, and I beg you, Gentlemen, to make them acceptable, to the Council and General Assembly of the State of Vermont, for the very obliging and affectionate terms in which they notice me and my public services. To such confidence and support as I have experienced from councils, legislative assemblies, and the great body of American citizens, I owed the best exertions of every faculty I possessed; happy now in the reflection, that our joint labors have been crowned with success. When withdrawn to the shade of private life, I shall view with increasing pleasure the growing prosperity of the United States. In the perfect protection of their government I trust to enjoy my retirement in tranquillity; and then, while indulging a favorite wish of my heart in agricultural pursuits, I may hope to make even my private business and amusements of some use to my country. I am, &c.*

* From the time the President published his *Farewell Address*, till the term of the presidency expired, he received public addresses from all the State legislatures, which were convened within that period, and also from many other public bodies, expressing a cordial approbation of his conduct during the eight years that he had filled the office of Chief Magistrate, and deep regret that the nation was to be deprived of his services. To print all his replies would require more space, than the plan of this work will admit. A selection from them will be found in the next volume.

TO JOHN H. STONE, GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND.

Philadelphia, 23 December, 1796.

DEAR SIR,

Yesterday I received your letter of the 16th instant, covering the resolutions of the Senate and House of Delegates of the State of Maryland, passed on the 13th and 14th. The very obliging and friendly terms, in which you have made this communication, merit my sincere thanks.*

The manner, in which the two branches of the legislature of Maryland have expressed their sense of my services, is too honorable and too affectionate ever to be forgotten. Without assigning to my exertions the extensive influence they are pleased to ascribe to them, I may with great truth say, that the exercise of every faculty I possessed was joined to the efforts of the virtue, talents, and valor of my fellow-citizens to effect our independence; and I concur with the legislature in repeating with pride and joy, what will

* Resolutions had been unanimously adopted by the legislature of Maryland, approving in the highest terms the public services of the President, and particularly the sentiments advanced by him in the *Farewell Address*. It was "resolved, that, to perpetuate this valuable present in the most striking view to posterity, it be printed and published with the laws of this session, as an evidence of our approbation of its political axioms, and a small testimony of the affection we bear to the precepts of him, to whom, under Divine Providence, we are principally indebted for our greatest political blessings."

In his letter communicating to the President the resolutions of the legislature, Governor Stone said;

"I consider it the most agreeable and honorable circumstance of my life, that, during my administering the government of Maryland, I should have been twice gratified in communicating to you the unanimous and unreserved approbation of my countrymen of your public conduct, as well as their gratitude for your eminent services. As this will probably be the last time, that this pleasing duty will devolve on me, I beg permission most cordially to join my countrymen in those sentiments, which are expressed with such sincerity." — *Annapolis, December 16th.*

be an everlasting honor to our country, that our revolution was so distinguished for moderation, virtue, and humanity, as to merit the eulogium they have pronounced, of being unsullied with a crime.

With the same entire devotion to my country, every act of my civil administration has been aimed to secure to it the advantages, which result from a stable and free government; and, with gratitude to Heaven, I unite with the legislature of Maryland in the pleasing reflection, that our country has continued to feel the blessings of peace, liberty, and prosperity, whilst Europe and the Indies have been convulsed with the horrors of a dreadful and desolating war. My ardent prayers are offered, that those afflicted regions may now speedily see their calamities terminated, and also feel the blessings of returning peace.

I cannot omit my acknowledgments to the Senate and House of Delegates for the manner in which they have noticed my late Address to my fellow-citizens. This notice, with similar acts in other States, leads me to hope that the advice, which therein I took the liberty to offer as the result of much experience and reflection, may produce some good.

Their kind wishes for my domestic happiness, in my contemplated retirement, are entitled to my cordial thanks.

If it shall please God to prolong a life already far advanced into the vale of years, no attending felicity can equal that, which I shall feel in seeing the administration of our government operating to preserve the independence, prosperity, and welfare of the American people. With great respect and consideration, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Philadelphia, 4 January, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

As it is very desirable, that the papers respecting the discontents of France should be got into Congress, and be sent also to Mr. Pinckney, as soon as possible, if you mean to give the other gentlemen a perusal of the statement for the latter, it would save time if this were done as you are proceeding towards the close of that statement. It is questionable, whether the present and pressing avocations of the other two secretaries will allow them to gò carefully over it; but this, I conceive, does not apply to the Attorney-General.

I have no doubt, that you have taken care and will continue to be assured of your facts; for, as this business will certainly come before the public, not only the facts, but the candor also, the expression and force of every word, will be examined with the most scrutinizing eye, and compared with every thing, that will admit of a different construction, and, if there be the least ground for it, we shall be charged with unfairness and an intention to impose on and to mislead the public judgment.

Hence, and from a desire that the statement may be full, fair, calm, and argumentative, without asperity or any thing more irritating in the comments, than the narration of facts, which expose unfounded charges and assertions, does itself produce, I have wished that the letter to Mr. Pinckney may be revised over and over again. Much depends upon it, as it relates to ourselves and in the eyes of the world, whatever may be the effect, as it respects the governing powers of France. I am always and affectionately yours, &c.

TO DAVID STUART.

Philadelphia, 8 January, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 18th ultimo, with its enclosures, came to hand in the usual course of the post; but the pressure of public business has prevented my giving it an acknowledgment until now.

The first thing I shall do, after I am settled at Mount Vernon, will be to adjust all my accounts of a private nature; the doing of which, as they ought, has been prevented by public avocations.

As to what effect M. Adet's conduct has had or will have on the public mind, you can form a better opinion than myself. One of the objects, which he had in view, in timing the publication,* is too apparent to require explanation. Some of his own zealots do not scruple to confess, that he has been too precipitate, and thereby injured the cause he meant to espouse; which is to establish such an influence in this country, as to sway the government and to control its measures. Evidences of this design are abundant, and new proofs are exhibiting themselves every day to illustrate the fact; and yet, lamentable thought! a large party, under real or pretended fears of British influence, are moving Heaven and earth to aid him in these designs. It is a fact well known, for history proves it, that, from the restless temper of the French and the policy of that nation, they attempt openly or covertly, by threats or soothing professions, to influence the conduct of most governments. That they have attempted

* Probably the pamphlet, which had just been issued in Philadelphia, entitled *Notes addressées par le Citoyen Adet, Ministre Plénipotentiare de la République Française près les Etats-Unis d'Amérique, au Secrétaire d'Etat des Etats-Unis.* This pamphlet was printed in French, with a translation facing each page, the whole extending to ninety-five pages.

it with us, a little time will show. But, finding that a neutral conduct had been adopted, and would not be relinquished by those who administered the government, the next step was to try the people; and, to work upon them, several presses and many scribblers have been employed, to emblazon the improper acts of the British government and its officers, and to place them in all the most exaggerated and odious points of view, of which they were susceptible; to complain, that there was not only a deficiency of friendship, but a want of justice also, in the executive towards France, the cause of which, say they, is to be found in a predilection for Great Britain. This not working so well as was expected, from a supposition that there was too much confidence in, and perhaps personal regard for, the present chief magistrate and his politics, the batteries latterly have been levelled at him particularly and personally. Although he is soon to become a private citizen, his opinions are to be knocked down, and his character reduced as low as they are capable of sinking it, even by resorting to absolute falsehoods. As an evidence whereof, and of the plan they are pursuing, I send you a letter from Mr. Paine to me, printed in this city, and disseminated with great industry. Others of a similar nature are also in circulation.

To what lengths the French Directory will ultimately go, it is difficult to say; but, that they have been led to the present point by our own people, I have no doubt. Whether some, who have done this, would choose to accompany them any farther or not, I shall not undertake to decide. But I shall be mistaken, if the candid part of my countrymen, although they may be under a French influence, do not see and acknowledge, that they have imbibed erroneous

impressions of the conduct of this government towards France, when the communication, which I promised at the opening of the session, and which will be ready in a few days, comes before the public. It will be seen, if I mistake not, also, that that country has not such a claim upon our gratitude, as has been generally supposed, and that this country has violated no engagement with it, been guilty of no act of injustice towards it, nor been wanting in friendship, where it could be rendered without departing from the neutral station we had taken and resolved to maintain.

Enclosed you will receive also a production of *Peter Porcupine*, alias William Cobbett. Making allowances for the asperity of an Englishman, for some of his strong and coarse expressions, and a want of official information as to many facts, it is not a bad thing.

I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Private.

Monday, 9 January, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Not having seen the conclusion of your statement for General Pinckney, if completed, and not knowing in what manner you propose to sum it up, it has occurred to me, that closing with some such sentiments as the following might not be improper.

That the conduct of the United States towards France has been, as will appear from a foregoing statement, regulated by the strictest principles of neutrality.

That there has been no attempt in the government to violate our treaty with that country, to weaken our

engagements therewith, or to withhold any friendship we could render, consistent with the neutrality we had adopted.

That peace has been our primary object; but, so far has it been from inducing us to acquiesce silently in the capturing of our vessels, impressing our seamen, or in the misconduct of the naval or others officers of the British government, that no instance can be produced of authenticated facts having passed unnoticed, and, where occasion required it, without strong remonstrances.

That this government, seeing no propriety in the measure, nor conceiving itself to be under any obligation to communicate to the ministers of the French Republic all the unpleasant details of what had passed between it and the British minister here, or with the minister of foreign affairs at the court of London, on these accounts, conscious of its fair dealing towards all the belligerent powers, and wrapped up in its own integrity, little expected, under the circumstances which have been enumerated, the upbraidings it has met with; notwithstanding, it now is, as it always has been the earnest wish of the government (and you cannot too strongly enforce it) to be on the best and most friendly footing with the Republic of France; and we have no doubt, after giving this candid exposition of facts, that the Directory will revoke the orders, under which our trade is suffering, and will pay the damages it has sustained thereby. I am, Sir, yours sincerely.

TO BENJAMIN WALKER.

Philadelphia, 12 January, 1797.

DEAR WALKER,

Permit me once more to give you the trouble of forwarding the enclosed letters to their respective addresses. If you read the *Aurora* of this city, or those gazettes, which are under the same influence, you cannot but have perceived with what malignant industry and persevering falsehoods I am assailed, in order to weaken if not to destroy the confidence of the public.

Amongst other attempts to effect this purpose, spurious letters, known at the time of their first publication (I believe in the year 1777) to be forgeries, to answer a similar purpose in the revolution, are (or extracts from them) brought forward with the highest emblazoning of which they are susceptible, with a view to attach principles to me, which every action of my life has given the lie to. But that is no stumbling-block with the editors of these papers and their supporters. And now, perceiving a disinclination on my part, and perhaps knowing that I had determined not to take notice of such attacks, they are pressing this matter upon the public mind with more earnestness than usual, urging that my silence is a proof of their genuineness.

Although I never wrote, nor ever saw one of these letters until they issued from New York in print, yet the author of them must have been tolerably well acquainted in, or with some person of, my family, to have given the names and some circumstances, which are grouped in the mass of erroneous details. But, of all the mistakes which have been committed in this business, none is more palpable, or susceptible of

detection, than the manner in which it is said they were obtained, by the capture of my mulatto Billy, with a portmanteau. All the army under my immediate command could contradict this, and I believe most of them know, that no attendant of mine, nor a particle of my baggage, ever fell into the hands of the enemy during the whole course of the war.

It would be a singular satisfaction to me to learn, who was the author of these letters, and from what source they originated. No person in this country can, I conceive, give this information but Mr. Rivington. If, therefore, you are upon terms of familiarity with that gentleman, and see no impropriety in hinting this desire to him, by doing it you would oblige me. He may comply to what extent his own judgment shall dictate; and I pledge my honor, that nothing to his disadvantage, or the disadvantage of any of the actors of that time, shall result from it.*

* These spurious letters were printed in Rivington's *Royal Gazette* in February, 1778, as mentioned heretofore (Vol. V. p. 379). Since writing the note on that page, I have seen a copy of the letters, which was printed in London "*for J. Bew, No. 28, Pater-Noster-Row, 1777.*" It hence appears, that they were published in England before they were inserted in *Rivington's Gazette.* Rivington remained in New York after the war, and it seems was living there when the above letter was written. No reply from Mr. Walker is on file explaining the result of his inquiry.

A new edition of the spurious letters had lately made its appearance with the following title. "*Epistles Domestic, Confidential, and Official, from General Washington; written about the Commencement of the American Contest, when he entered on the Command of the Army of the United States. New York, printed by G. Robinson and J. Bull. London, reprinted by F. H. Rivington, No. 62, St. Paul's Church-yard,* 1796." To swell the volume into a respectable size, and to give the whole an air of genuineness, several important public despatches were added, which actually passed between General Washington and British commanders in America, and also a selection from addresses, orders, and instructions. In this guise the work had an insidious aim, being intended to injure the reputation of Washington and weaken the influence of his character.

This edition was sent out shortly after the two volumes of Wash-

I offer the compliments of the season (and you will do me the justice to believe, that they are warmer than the weather,) to Mrs. Walker and yourself, of whose health and happiness we shall always be glad to hear. I am your affectionate, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Philadelphia, 22 January, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 19th instant was received yesterday. From the general impression made on my mind,

---

ington's *Official Letters to Congress*, which had been copied by permission in the office of the Secretary of State, carried to London by Mr. John Carey, and published there under his direction in the year 1795. This circumstance was made use of as an additional cover to the deception of the forged epistles, as will be seen by the following extract from the preface to the volume in which they were now introduced anew to the public.

"Since the publication of the two volumes of General Washington's *Original Letters to the Congress*, the editor has been repeatedly applied to for the General's *Domestic and Confidential Epistles*, first published soon after the beginning of the American war. These epistles are here offered to the public, together with a copious appendix, containing a number of *Official Letters and Papers*, not to be found in the General's *Original Letters* lately published. The world is, without doubt, greatly indebted to the industrious compiler of the two volumes of *Original Letters* above noticed; but the collection must certainly be looked upon as in a mutilated state, so long as it remains unaccompanied with the Epistles, &c., which are now respectfully submitted to the patronage of the public, and which form a supplement absolutely necessary to render the work complete. That this collection of *Domestic and Confidential Epistles* will be regarded as a valuable acquisition, by a very great majority of the citizens of the United States, is presumable from the prevailing taste of all well-informed people. Men not precluded by ignorance from every degree of literary curiosity, will always feel a solicitude to become acquainted with whatever may serve to throw light on the characters of illustrious personages. History represents them acting on the stage of the world, courting the applause of mankind. To see them in their real character, we must follow them behind the scenes, among their private connexions and domestic concerns."

relative to the claim of M. de Neufville * on the justice of this country, a delay or refusal to administer it would be hard; but I must add, that I am too little acquainted with the particulars to form a correct opinion, and, were it otherwise, I do not see how I could with propriety appear directly or indirectly in the business, as I do not recollect having had any agency therein. The numberless applications of this sort, which are made to me, often in the dernier resort, without the means of relief, are very distressing to my feelings.

The conduct of France towards this country is, according to my ideas of it, outrageous beyond conception; not to be warranted by her treaty with us, by the law of nations, by any principle of justice, or even by a regard to decent appearances. From such considerations something might have been expected; but, on her professions of friendship and loving-kindness toward us I have built no hope; but rather supposed they would last as long and no longer, than it accorded with her interest to bestow them, or she found it would not divert us from the observance of that strict neutrality, which we had adopted and were persevering in.

In a few days will be published a statement of facts, in a letter to General Pinckney, with references, containing a full answer to all the charges exhibited in M. Adet's *Notes* against the conduct of this government. After reading them with attention, I would thank

* M. de Neufville, of Holland, had rendered important political services to the United States, in promoting loans in that country, and in various pecuniary transactions. By reason of these services his affairs became embarrassed, and he died leaving his family in distressed circumstances. His widow came to the United States, with the view of petitioning Congress for relief, and Mr. Hamilton wrote to the President on the subject of her claim. "I do not know," said he, "what the case admits of; but, from some papers which she showed me, it would seem that she has pretensions to the kindness of this country."

you for your sentiments thereon fully and frankly communicated; and what you think ought further to be attempted to preserve this country in peace, consistently with the respect which is due to ourselves.*

In some of the gazettes, and in conversation also, it is suggested, that an envoy extraordinary ought to be sent to France; but has not General Pinckney gone there already for the express purpose of explaining matters and removing inquietudes? With what more could another be charged? What would that gentleman think of having a person treading on his heels, by the time he had arrived in Paris, when the arguments used to induce him to go there are all that could be urged to influence the other? And where is the character to be had, acceptable and qualified for such a trust? The sooner you can give me your sentiments on these queries the more pleasing will they be to, dear Sir, your sincere friend, &c.

* In Mr. Hamilton's letter to the President he had said; "Our merchants here are becoming very uneasy on the subject of the French captures and seizures. They are certainly very perplexing and alarming, and present an evil of a magnitude to be intolerable, if not shortly remedied. My anxiety to preserve peace with France is known to you; and it must be the wish of every prudent man, that no honorable expedient for avoiding a rupture be omitted. Yet there are bounds to all things. This country cannot see its trade an absolute prey to France, without resistance. We seem to be where we were with Great Britain, when Mr. Jay was sent there; and I cannot discern but that the spirit of the policy, then pursued with regard to England, will be the proper one now in respect to France, namely, a solemn and final appeal to the justice and interest of France, and, if this will not do, measures of self-defence. Any thing is better than absolute humiliation. France has already gone much further than Great Britain ever did. I give vent to my impressions on this subject, though I am persuaded the train of your own reflections cannot materially vary."—*New York, January 19th.*

TO JOHN ADAMS, VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Monday, 20 February, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for giving me the perusal of the enclosed. The sentiments do honor to the head and heart of the writer; and, if my wishes would be of any avail, they should go to you in a strong hope, that you will not withhold merited promotion from Mr. John Quincy Adams because he is your son. For, without intending to compliment the father or the mother, or to censure any others, I give it as my decided opinion, that Mr. Adams is the most valuable public character we have abroad, and that he will prove himself to be the ablest of all our diplomatic corps.

If he were now to be brought into that line, or into any other public walk, I could not, upon the principle which has regulated my own conduct, disapprove the caution which is hinted at in the letter. But he is already entered; the public more and more, as he is known, are appreciating his talents and worth; and his country would sustain a loss, if these are checked by over delicacy on your part.

With sincere esteem and affectionate regard, I am ever yours.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Philadelphia, 2 March, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

Amongst the last acts of my political life, and before I go hence into retirement, profound will be the acknowledgment of your kind and affectionate letter from Boston, dated the 15th of January.

From the friendship I have always borne to you, and from the interest I have ever taken in whatever relates to your prosperity and happiness, I participated in the sorrows, which I know you must have felt for your late heavy losses. But it is not for man to scan the wisdom of Providence. The best we can do, is to submit to its decrees. Reason, religion, and philosophy teach us to do this; but it is time alone, that can ameliorate the pangs of humanity and soften its woes.

To the wearied traveller, who sees a resting-place, and is bending his body to lean thereon, I now compare myself; but to be suffered to do this in peace, is too much to be endured by some. To misrepresent my motives, to reprobate my politics, and to weaken the confidence which has been reposed in my administration, are objects, which cannot be relinquished by those who will be satisfied with nothing short of a change in our political system. The consolation, however, which results from conscious rectitude, and the approving voice of my country, unequivocally expressed by its representatives, deprive their sting of its poison, and place in the same point of view both the weakness and malignity of their efforts.

Although the prospect of retirement is most grateful to my soul, and I have not a wish to mix again in the great world, or to partake in its politics, yet I am not without my regrets at parting with (perhaps never more to meet) the few intimates, whom I love, and among these, be assured, you are one.

The account, given by Mr. Bingham and others, of your agreeable situation and prospects at St. George's, gave me infinite pleasure; and no one wishes more sincerely than I do, that they may increase with your years. The remainder of my life, which in the course of nature cannot be long, will be occupied in rural

amusements; and, though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling crowd, none would more than myself be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at Mount Vernon; more than twenty miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely that I ever shall be.

As early in next week as I can make arrangements for it, I shall commence my journey for Mount Vernon. To-morrow at dinner I shall, as a servant of the public, take my leave of the President elect, of the foreign characters, the heads of departments, &c., and the day following, with pleasure, I shall witness the inauguration of my successor to the chair of government.

On the subject of politics I shall say nothing. You will have an opportunity of seeing and conversing with many of the legislators, from whom, so far as it relates to the proceedings of their own body, you can learn the details. The gazettes will furnish the rest.

Mrs. Washington unites with me in every good wish for you, Mrs. Knox, and family; and, with unfeigned truth, I am yours always and affectionately.

TO JONATHAN TRUMBULL.

Philadelphia, 3 March, 1797.

My dear Sir,

Before the curtain drops on my political life, which it will do this evening I expect for ever, I shall acknowledge, although it be in a few hasty lines only, the receipt of your kind and affectionate letter of the 23d of January last.

When I add, that according to custom all the acts of the session, excepting two or three very unimportant bills, have been presented to me within the last four

days, you will not be surprised at the pressure under which I write at present. But it must astonish others, who know that the Constitution allows the President ten days to deliberate on each bill, which is brought before him, that he should be allowed by the legislature less than half of that time to consider all the business of the session; and, in some instances, scarcely an hour to revolve the most important. But as the scene is closing with me, it is of little avail now to let it be with murmurs.

I should be very unhappy, if I thought, that my relinquishing the reins of government would produce any of the consequences, which your fears forebode. In all free governments, contentions in elections will take place, and, whilst it is confined to our own citizens, it is not to be regretted; but severely indeed ought it to be reprobated, when occasioned by foreign machinations. I trust, however, that the good sense of our countrymen will guard the public weal against this and every other innovation, and that, although we may be a little wrong now and then, we shall return to the right path with more avidity. I can never believe, that Providence, which has guided us so long and through such a labyrinth, will withdraw its protection at this crisis.

Although I shall resign the chair of government without a single regret, or any desire to intermeddle in politics again, yet there are many of my compatriots, among whom be assured I place you, from whom I shall part sorrowing; because, unless I meet with them at Mount Vernon, it is not likely that I shall ever see them more, as I do not expect that I shall ever be twenty miles from it, after I am tranquilly settled there. To tell you how glad I should be to see you at that place is unnecessary. To this I will add, that it would

not only give me pleasure, but pleasure also to Mrs. Washington, and others of the family with whom you are acquainted, and who all unite, in every good wish for you and yours, with, dear Sir, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Philadelphia, 3 March, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

At the conclusion of my public employments, I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters, which first appeared in the year 1777, and were obtruded upon the public as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau, that I had left in the care of my mulatto servant, named Billy, who, it is pretended, was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period, when these letters were first printed, will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the public mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American commander-in-chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty. Another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character and deceive the people.

The letters in question have the dates, addresses, and signatures here following.

"New York, June 12th, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia.

"G. W."

"To John Parke Custis, Esq., at the Hon. Benedict Calvert's Esq., Mount Airy, Maryland, June 18th, 1776.

"GEO. WASHINGTON."

"New York, July 8th, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington, at Mount Vernon, Fairfax County, Virginia.

"G. W."

"New York, July 15th, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington.

"G. W."

"New York, July 16th, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington.

"G. W."

"New York, July 22d, 1776. To Mr. Lund Washington.

"G. W."

"June 24th, 1776. To Mrs. Washington.

"G. W."

At the time, when these letters first appeared, it was notorious to the army immediately under my command, and particularly to the gentlemen attached to my person, that my mulatto man Billy had never been one moment in the power of the enemy. It is also a fact, that no part of my baggage, nor any of my attendants, were captured during the whole course of the war. These well-known facts made it unnecessary, during the war, to call the public attention to the forgery, by any express declaration of mine; and a firm reliance on my fellow-citizens, and the abundant proofs, which they gave of their confidence in me, rendered it alike unnecessary to take any formal notice of the revival of the imposition during my civil administration. But, as I cannot know how soon a more serious event may succeed to that, which will this day take place, I have thought it a duty, that I owed to myself, to my country, and to truth, now to detail the circumstances above recited; and to add my solemn declaration, that the letters herein described are a base forgery, and that I never saw or heard of them until they appeared in print.

The present letter I commit to your care, and desire that it may be deposited in the office of the department of State, as a testimony of the truth to the

present generation and to posterity. Accept, I pray you, the sincere esteem and affectionate regard of, dear Sir, &c.*

TO BARTHOLOMEW DANDRIDGE.

Philadelphia, 8 March, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your conduct, during a six years' residence in my family, having been such as to meet my full approba-

---

* The time had now arrived, when Washington was to resign his public station, and retire to private life. In February the votes had been counted in Congress for his successor, and it was found that John Adams was elected President, and Thomas Jefferson Vice-President.

"On the 4th of March, the members of the Senate, conducted by the Vice-President, together with the officers of the general and State governments, and an immense concourse of citizens, convened in the hall of the House of Representatives, in which the oaths were administered to the President. The sensibility, which was manifested when General Washington entered, did not surpass the cheerfulness which overspread his own countenance, nor the heartfelt pleasure with which he saw another invested with the powers and authorities that had so long been exercised by himself.

"In the speech delivered by the President on taking the oaths of office, after some judicious observations on the constitution of his country, and on the dangers to which it was exposed, that able statesman thus spoke of his predecessor.

"'Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed), which the people of America have exhibited, to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations for eight years, under the administration of a citizen, who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, conducting a people inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity, has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

"'In that retirement which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services, the gratitude of mankind, the happy fruits of them to himself and the world, which are

tion, and believing that a declaration to this effect would be satisfactory to yourself, and justice requiring it from me, I make it with pleasure, and in full confidence that those principles of honor, integrity, and benevolence, which I have reason to believe have hitherto guided your steps, will still continue to mark your conduct. I have only to add a wish, that you may lose no opportunity of making such advances in useful acquirements, as may benefit yourself, your friends, and mankind; and I am led to anticipate an accomplishment of this wish, when I consider the manner in

---

daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of his country, which is opening from year to year. His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives a bulwark, against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace.'

"To testify their love for the person, who had for eight years administered the government of the United States, the merchants of Philadelphia had prepared a splendid banquet for the day, to which the General, several officers of rank in the late army, the heads of departments, foreign ministers, and other persons of distinction were invited. In the rotunda, in which it was given, an elegant compliment was prepared for the *principal guest*, which is thus described in the papers of the day.

"'Upon entering the area, the General was conducted to his seat. On a signal given, music played Washington's March, and a scene, which represented simple objects in the rear of the principal seat, was drawn up and discovered emblematical paintings. The principal was a female figure as large as life, representing America, seated on an elevation composed of sixteen marble steps. At her left side stood the federal shield and eagle, and at her feet lay the *cornucopia*; in her right hand, she held the Indian calumet of peace supporting the cap of liberty; in the perspective appeared the temple of Fame; and, on her left hand, an altar dedicated to public gratitude, upon which incense was burning. In her left hand, she held a scroll inscribed *Valedictory;* and at the foot of the altar lay a plumed helmet and sword, from which a figure of General Washington, large as life, appeared retiring down the steps, pointing with his right hand to the emblems of power which he had resigned, and with his left to a beautiful landscape representing Mount Vernon, in front of which oxen were seen harnessed to the plough. Over the General appeared a *genius* placing a wreath of laurels on his head.'" — MARSHALL'S *Life of Washington*, Vol. V. p. 730. APPENDIX, pp. 34, 35.

which you have hitherto improved such occasions as have offered themselves to you.

The career of life, on which you are now entering, will present new scenes and frequent opportunities for the improvement of a mind desirous of obtaining useful knowledge; but I am sure you will never forget, that, without virtue and without integrity, the finest talents and the most brilliant accomplishments can never gain the respect or conciliate the esteem of the truly valuable part of mankind. Wishing you health, happiness, and prosperity in all your laudable undertakings, I remain your sincere friend and affectionate servant.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 3 April, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 24th ultimo has been duly received, and I thank you for the information given in it. Let me pray you to have the goodness to communicate to me occasionally such matters, as are interesting and not contrary to the rules of your official duty to disclose. We get so many details in the gazettes, and of such different complexions, that it is impossible to know what credence to give to any of them.

The conduct of the French government is so much beyond calculation, and so unaccountable upon any principle of justice, or even of that sort of policy, which is familiar to plain understandings, that I shall not now puzzle my brains in attempting to develope the motives of it.

We got home without accident, and found the roads drier and better than I ever found them at that season

of the year. The attentions we met with on our journey were very flattering, and to some, whose minds are differently formed from mine, would have been highly relished; but I avoided in every instance, where I had any previous knowledge of the intention, and could by earnest entreaties prevail, all parade and escorts. Mrs. Washington took a violent cold in Philadelphia, which hangs upon her still; but it is not as bad as it has been.*

I find myself in the situation nearly of a new beginner; for, although I have not houses to build (except one, which I must erect for the accommodation and security of my military, civil, and private papers, which are voluminous and may be interesting), yet I have scarcely any thing else about me, that does not require considerable repairs. In a word, I am already surrounded by joiners, masons, and painters; and such is my anxiety to get out of their hands, that I have scarcely a room to put a friend into, or to sit in myself, without the music of hammers, or the odoriferous scent of paint.

Mrs. Washington and Miss Custis thank you for your kind remembrance of them, and join in best regards for Mrs. McHenry and yourself, with, dear Sir, your sincere friend, &c.

---

* The following extract is from a Baltimore paper, dated March 13th. — "Last evening arrived in this city, on his way to Mount Vernon, the illustrious object of veneration and gratitude, GEORGE WASHINGTON. His Excellency was accompanied by his lady and Miss Custis, and by the son of the unfortunate Lafayette and his preceptor. At a distance from the city, he was met by a crowd of citizens, on horse and foot, who thronged the road to greet him, and by a detachment from Captain Hollingsworth's troop, who escorted him in through as great a concourse of people as Baltimore ever witnessed. On alighting at the Fountain Inn, the General was saluted with reiterated and thundering huzzas from the spectators. His Excellency, with the companions of his journey, leaves town we understand this morning."

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Mount Vernon, 15 May, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I thank you for the information contained in your letter of the 19th ultimo, and infer from it with pleasure, that you must be better if not quite recovered from the indisposition of which you complained, by your being enabled to write. To know this, however, would give me satisfaction, as I entertain an affectionate regard for you.

Various conjectures have been formed relative to the causes, which have induced the President to convene the Congress at this season of the year; among others, the laying an embargo is supposed by some to be in contemplation, whether with or without foundation, you, who are acting on the great theatre, have the best means of judging. For myself, having turned aside from the broad walks of political, into the narrow paths of private life, I shall leave it with those, whose duty it is to consider subjects of this sort, and, as every good citizen ought to do, conform to whatsoever the ruling powers shall decide. To make and sell a little flour annually, to repair houses (going fast to ruin), to build one for the security of my papers of a public nature, and to amuse myself in agricultural and rural pursuits, will constitute employment for the few years I have to remain on this terrestrial globe. If, also, I could now and then meet the friends I esteem, it would fill the measure and add zest to my enjoyments; but, if ever this happens, it must be under my own vine and fig-tree, as I do not think it probable that I shall go beyond twenty miles from them.

To detail matters of private concern would be as

improper as it would be uninteresting; and therefore, upon the principle I have adopted, it will never be in my power to make adequate returns for your kind communications, which I wish may be continued, when you are at leisure and at liberty; for there is so little dependence on newspaper publications, which take whatever complexion the editors please to give them, that persons at a distance, who have no other means of information, are often at a loss to form an opinion on the most important occurrences. Mrs. Washington and Nelly Custis unite with me in cordial remembrance of Mrs. Wolcott and yourself, and with much sincerity I remain affectionately yours.

TO WILLIAM HEATH.

Mount Vernon, 20 May, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Your kind and friendly letter of the 17th ultimo has been duly received, and I beg you to accept my sincere thanks for the affectionate sentiments you have been pleased to express for me in it.

I can assure you, Sir, I never ascribed a motive to the letter you wrote to me on my election to the chair of government, so unworthy of you as to suppose it was written with a view of "pressing yourself into notice, or seeking for a place." On the contrary I was led to believe, that domestic enjoyments in rural pursuits had more charms for you, and were more congenial to your inclination, than any appointment that would draw you from home.

I hope, as you do, that, notwithstanding our political horizon is much overcast, the wisdom, temper, and firmness of the government, supported by the great

mass of the people, will dispel the threatening clouds, and that all will end without any shedding of blood. To me this is so demonstrable, that not a particle of doubt would dwell on my mind relative thereto, if our citizens would advocate their own cause, instead of that of any other nation under the sun; that is, if, instead of being Frenchmen or Englishmen in politics, they would be Americans, indignant at every attempt of either, or any other power, to establish an influence in our councils, or presume to sow the seeds of discord or disunion among us. No policy, in my opinion, can be more clearly demonstrated, than that we should do justice to all, and have no political connexion with any of the European powers beyond those, which result from and serve to regulate our commerce with them. Our own experience, if it has not already had this effect, will soon convince us, that the idea of disinterested favors or friendship from any nation whatever is too novel to be calculated on, and there will always be found a wide difference between the words and actions of any of them.

It gives me great pleasure to hear from yourself, that you are writing *Memoirs* of those transactions, which passed under your notice during the revolutionary war.* Having always understood, that you were exact and copious in noting occurrences at the time they happened, a work of this kind will, from the candor and ability with which I am persuaded your notes were taken, be uncommonly correct and interesting.

* This work was published at Boston in the year 1798, entitled *Memoirs of Major-General Heath, containing Anecdotes, Details of Skirmishes, Battles, and other Military Events during the American War.* To skill in composition and elegance of style this book cannot lay the slightest claim; but, as a record of facts chronologically arranged, and of events coming under the writer's own observation, detailed with apparent candor and accuracy, it is not without merit.

Whether you mean to publish them at your own expense, or by subscription, is not intimated in your letter. If the latter, I pray you to consider me as a subscriber, and in any event as a purchaser of your production. That you may enjoy health to complete the work to your entire satisfaction, I devoutly pray, and that you may live afterwards to hear it applauded, as I doubt not it will be, I as sincerely wish. If I should live to see it published, I shall read it with great avidity. Retired from noise myself, and the responsibility attached to public employment, my hours will glide smoothly on. My best wishes, however, for the prosperity of our country will always have the first place in my thoughts; while to repair buildings, and to cultivate my farms, which require close attention, will occupy the few years, perhaps days, I may be a sojourner here, as I am now in the sixty-sixth year of my peregrination through life. With assurances of great esteem, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO THOMAS PINCKNEY.

Mount Vernon, 28 May, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

Let me congratulate you on your safe return to your native country and friends, after the important services you have rendered to the former, and thank you, as I most cordially do, for the favorable sentiments which you have been pleased to express for me, and of my public conduct. The approbation you have given of the latter, be assured, is highly pleasing to me. To receive testimonies of this kind from the good and virtuous, more especially from those who are competent to judge, and have had the means of

judging from the best sources of information, stamps a value on them which renders them peculiarly grateful to one's sensibility.

It remains to be seen whether our country will stand upon independent ground, or be directed in its political concerns by any other nation. A little time will show who are its true friends, or, what is synonymous, who are true Americans; those who are stimulating a foreign nation to unfriendly acts, repugnant to our rights and dignity, and advocating all its measures, or those whose only aim has been to maintain a strict neutrality, to keep the United States out of the vortex of European politics, and to preserve them in peace.

The President's speech will, I conceive, draw forth mediately or immediately an expression of the public mind; and, as it is the right of the people, that this should be carried into effect, their sentiments ought to be unequivocally known, that the principles on which the government has acted, and which, from the President's speech, are likely to be continued, may either be changed, or the opposition, that is endeavouring to embarrass every measure of the executive, may meet effectual discountenance. Things cannot and ought not to remain any longer in their present disagreeable state. Nor should the idea, that the government and the people have different views, be suffered any longer to prevail at home or abroad; for it is not only injurious to us, but disgraceful also, that a government constituted as ours is should be administered contrary to their interest, if the fact be so.*

* President Adams had summoned a special meeting of Congress, chiefly on account of the state of affairs between the United States and France. On the 31st of May he nominated to the Senate Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, Francis Dana, and John Marshall, to be jointly and severally envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to the

But, as I did not begin this letter with an intention of running into any political disquisition, I will stop where I am, and only add, that with sincere and affectionate regard I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 29 May, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I am indebted to you for several unacknowledged letters; but never mind that; go on as if you had answers. You are at the source of information, and can find many things to relate; while I have nothing to say, that could either inform or amuse a Secretary of War in Philadelphia.

I might tell him, that I begin my diurnal course with the sun; that, if my hirelings are not in their places at that time I send them messages of sorrow for their indisposition; that, having put these wheels in motion, I examine the state of things further; that, the more they are probed, the deeper I find the wounds, which my buildings have sustained by an absence and neglect of eight years; that, by the time I have accomplished these matters, breakfast (a little after seven o'clock, about the time I presume you are taking leave of Mrs. M'Henry,) is ready; that, this being over, I mount my horse and ride round my farms, which employs me until it is time to dress for dinner, at which I rarely miss seeing strange faces, come as they say out of respect for me. Pray, would not the word

---

French Republic. The object of the mission, as stated by the President, was, to "dissipate umbrages, remove prejudices, rectify errors, and adjust all differences, by a treaty between the two powers." Mr. Dana declined the appointment, and Elbridge Gerry was appointed in his place.

curiosity answer as well? And how different this from having a few social friends at a cheerful board! The usual time of sitting at table, a walk, and tea, bring me within the dawn of candlelight; previous to which, if not prevented by company, I resolve, that, as soon as the glimmering taper supplies the place of the great luminary, I will retire to my writing-table and acknowledge the letters I have received; but when the lights are brought, I feel tired and disinclined to engage in this work, conceiving that the next night will do as well. The next night comes, and with it the same causes for postponement, and so on.

This will account for your letter remaining so long unacknowledged; and, having given you the history of a day, it will serve for a year, and I am persuaded you will not require a second edition of it. But it may strike you, that in this detail no mention is made of any portion of time allotted for reading. The remark would be just, for I have not looked into a book since I came home; nor shall I be able to do it until I have discharged my workmen, probably not before the nights grow longer, when possibly I may be looking in Doomsday-Book. At present I shall only add, that I am always and affectionately yours.

TO OLIVER WOLCOTT, SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.

Mount Vernon, 29 May, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

I have received your letter of the 18th instant with its enclosures, and thank you for both. The President has in my opinion placed matters upon their true ground in his speech to Congress. The crisis calls

for an unequivocal expression of the public mind, and the speech will mediately or immediately bring this about. Things ought not, indeed cannot, remain long in their present state; and it is time the people should be thoroughly acquainted with the political situation of this country, and the causes which have produced it, that they may either give active and effectual support to those, to whom they have intrusted the administration of the government, if they approve the principles on which they have acted, or sanction the conduct of their opponents, who have endeavoured to bring about a change by embarrassing all its measures, not even short of foreign means.

Thus much for our own affairs, which, maugre the desolating scenes of Europe, might continue in the most happy, flourishing, and prosperous train, if the harmony of the Union were not endangered by the internal disturbers of its peace. With respect to the nations of Europe, their situation appears so awful, that nothing short of Omnipotence can predict the issue; although every human mind must feel for the miseries it endures. Our course is plain; they who run may read it. Theirs is so bewildered and dark, so entangled and embarrassed, and so obviously under the influence of intrigue, that one would suppose, if any thing could open the eyes of our misled citizens, that the deplorable situation of those people could not fail to effect it. With sincere and affectionate regard, I am always yours.

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Mount Vernon, 24 June, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

To learn from your favor of the 25th of January, that you were well, gave me singular pleasure; but, as I had left Philadelphia before your letters, dated in Paris, had been received at the Secretary of State's office, and not having seen Mr. Horry yet, I have only such accounts as have been given to the public of the treatment you have met with from the French Directory. So extraordinary indeed it is, as to require no comment; nor shall I add any thing more on the subject, than that your conduct on the occasion is universally approved. That it deserves to be so, is my decided opinion.

I had nothing more in view, by giving you a genuine copy of the intercepted letter from me to Gouverneur Morris than to enable you, if a spurious one should be exhibited for insidious purposes, to place the correspondence in its true light. If the matter sleeps, I have no wish to awaken it. Should it, however, be brought before the public, it will *primâ facie* carry along with it the mark of private intercourse; but, if the case were otherwise, there is no sentiment expressed, that I have a disposition to retract.

I am much obliged to General Dumas for the pamphlet he had the goodness to send, and for his kind remembrance of me. I recollect him well as an officer of high estimation in the French army, that served in this country. And hope he and others, friends to the oppressed and distressed Lafayette, will use their exertions to obtain the release of him and his family from the ignominious treatment, which has been inflicted with so much rigor on the one hand, and borne with so much fortitude on the other.

This letter will be handed to you by General Marshall, who is, with Mr. Gerry and yourself, a joint envoy, to try if the difference between France and us can be amicably adjusted. You will find him well worthy of your friendship and confidence. He is a firm friend upon true principles to his country, sensible, and discreet. Be assured always of the sincere esteem and affectionate regard of, dear Sir, &c.

TO GENERAL DUMAS.

Mount Vernon, 24 June, 1797.

SIR,

Through the medium of General Pinckney, I was honored with your letter of the 24th of January, accompanying your pamphlet on the military and political situation of France. For both I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments and thanks. That you should have given me a place in your remembrance is equally flattering and grateful to my feelings; as I could not but esteem you, while I had an opportunity of being acquainted with your merits in our revolutionary war.*

For want of a competent knowledge of the French language, I cannot, in reading your treatise on the above subjects, do complete justice to the sentiments

* General Dumas had served in America as an officer in the army of Count de Rochambeau. He had acquired a good knowledge of the English language, and says in his letter; "General Pinckney, to whom I am obliged for information of your Excellency's health, will be so kind as to forward to you with this packet the homage of my respect and of my grateful remembrance. I beg of you to accept of this short pamphlet on our military and political situation, as a witness of my sentiments. Your Excellency will observe in it the effect of your lessons, and perhaps also the true character of public opinion in France." General Dumas laments also the unfortunate fate of Lafayette and his

it contains; but I know enough to be persuaded of its merits, and to wish that they may contribute to the restoration of that peace and harmony, (whatever the motives may be for carrying on the war,) which are so congenial to the feelings of humanity.

That it may, if not sooner accomplished, be the means of restoring our mutual friend Lafayette and his family to their liberty, health, and the confidence of their country, is my ardent wish, as it also is that all his friends would exert themselves to effect it; the first, if no more. His son, and Mr. Frestel, who appears to have been his Mentor, are and have been residents in my family since their arrival in this country, except in the first moments of it; and a modest, sensible, and well-disposed youth he is.

I am very glad to hear, that my old friend and acquaintance General Rochambeau is alive, and in the enjoyment of tolerably good health. It is some years since I had the honor to receive a letter from him; but, if it should fall in your way at any time to recall me to his remembrance by the presentation of my best regards to him, which I pray you to accept also yourself, it would oblige me.

This letter will be presented to you by General Marshall, one of our compatriots in the American war, and now a joint envoy with General Pinckney and Mr. Gerry, (all of whom I beg leave to introduce to your acquaintance as men of honor and worth,) appointed for the purpose of adjusting the difference, which exists unfortunately between our two nations;

companions, and hopes that a peace will soon restore them to liberty. He then adds, "General Rochambeau is still at his country-seat near Vendome. He enjoys there tolerably good health considering his great age, and reckons, as well as his military family, amongst his most dear and glorious remembrances, that of the time we had the honor to serve under your command." — *Paris, January 24th.*

which no man more sincerely regrets than I do, or more devoutly wishes to have them accommodated upon principles of equity and justice.

I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO THOMAS ERSKINE.*

Mount Vernon, 7 July, 1797.

SIR,

Your "*View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War with France*," which you were pleased to send to me through the medium of Mr. Bond of Philadelphia, has been duly received, and I pray you to accept my best acknowledgments for this mark of your polite attention, particularly for the exalted compliment which accompanied it.

To have so conducted my steps in the intricate walks of public life, and through a long course, as to meet the approbation of my country and the esteem of good men, is, next to the consciousness of having acted in all things from my best judgment, the highest gratification of which my mind is susceptible, and will, during the remainder of a life, which is hastening to an end, and in moments of retirement better adapted to calm reflection than I have hitherto experienced, alleviate the pain and soften any cares, which are yet to be encountered, though hid from me at present.

For me to express my sentiments, with respect to the administration of the concerns of another government, might incur a charge of stepping beyond the line of prudence; but the principles of humanity will justify an avowal of my regret, and I do regret

---

* Afterwards the celebrated Lord Erskine.

exceedingly, that any causes whatever should have produced and continued until this time a war, more bloody, more expensive, more calamitous, and more pregnant with events, than modern or perhaps any other times can furnish an example of. And I most sincerely and devoutly wish, that your exertions, and those of others having the same object in view, may effect what human nature cries aloud for, a general peace.

I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO THE EARL OF RADNOR.

Mount Vernon, 8 July, 1797.

My Lord,

The sentiments, which your Lordship has been pleased to express, in your favor of the 19th of January last, relative to my public conduct, do me great honor; and I pray you to accept my grateful acknowledgment of the unequivocal evidence conveyed in your letter of the favorable opinion you entertain of the principles by which it was actuated.*

---

* *The Earl of Radnor's Letter.* — "Sir; though of necessity a stranger to you, I cannot deny myself the satisfaction among the many, who will probably even from this country intrude upon your retirement, of offering to you my congratulations on your withdrawing yourself from the scene of public affairs, with a character which appears to be perfectly unrivalled in history. The voluntary resignation of authority, wielded, as it was while you thought fit to wield it, for the advantage of your country, in the universal opinion of mankind, confirms the judgment I had presumed to form of your moderation, and completes the glory of your life.

"Permit me, Sir, who, enlisted in no political party, have as a public man looked up to you with veneration; who have seen the beginning of your career against England with approbation, because I felt England was unjust; who have seen you discontinue your hostility towards England, when in good faith she was no longer acting as an enemy to America, by honest counsels endeavouring to be as closely connected

For having performed duties, which I conceive every country has a right to require of its citizens, I claim no merit; but no man can feel more sensibly the reward of approbation for such services than I do. Next to the consciousness of having acted faithfully in discharging the several trusts, to which I have been called, the thanks of one's country and the esteem of good men are the highest gratification my mind is susceptible of.

At the age of sixty-five, I am now recommencing my agricultural and rural pursuits, which were always more congenial to my temper and disposition, than the noise and bustle of public employments; notwithstanding so small a portion of my life has been engaged in the former.

I reciprocate with great cordiality the good wishes you have been pleased to bestow on me, and pray devoutly, that we may both witness, and that shortly, the return of peace; for a more bloody, expensive, and eventful war is not recorded in modern, if to be found in ancient history. I have the honor to be your Lordship's, &c.

---

in amity as she is by natural and mutual interests; who have seen you the instrument in the hand of Providence of wresting from the British Parliament an influence destructive of the just rights of both countries, and of establishing the independence of America, which I am persuaded will continually, if your principles and your wisdom shall actuate your successors, be the means of securing them respectively to us both; who have seen you in adversity and prosperity alike the good, the firm, the moderate, the disinterested patriot; permit me, I say, as an Englishman and as a man, to rejoice at the completion of such a character, and to offer my unfeigned wishes for a peaceful evening of your life, and the realization (as is my sincere belief) of your posthumous fame, and your eternal happiness.

"I have the honor to subscribe myself your most obedient,

"RADNOR.

"*Longford Castle*, 19 *January*, 1797."

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 29 August, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Colonel Monroe passed through Alexandria last week, but did not honor me by a call.

From a variety of accounts, as well as from the extracts you had the kindness to send me, I have no doubt of the change in the sentiments of the people of France favorable to the interests of this country. But I can scarcely believe, that it will be so great or so sudden as some imagine. Candor is not a more conspicuous trait in the character of governments, than it is of individuals. It is hardly to be expected, then, that the Directory of France will acknowledge its errors, and tread back its steps immediately. This would announce at once, that there has been precipitancy and injustice in the measures they have pursued; or that they were incapable of judging, and had been deceived by false representations. Pride would be opposed to all these; and I can scarcely think the Directory will relinquish the hold it has upon those, who more than probably have suggested and promoted the measures they have been pursuing. I rather suppose, that they will lower their tone by degrees, and, as is usual, place the change to the credit of *French magnanimity.*

That the statement of facts in the printed letter to General Pinckney will work conviction, and produce a change of conduct in those, who are desirous of information, and not obstinately bent upon wrong measures, I have no doubt; and I can say with truth, that my mind has never been alarmed by any fears of a war with France. I always knew, that this government had no desire to go to war with that or any

other country; and I as firmly believed, that no power without a *semblance of justice* would declare war against it. That France has stepped far beyond the line of rectitude cannot be denied; that she has been encouraged to do so by a party among ourselves is, to my mind, equally certain; and, when it is considered moreover, that enriching themselves and injuring Great Britain were the expected consequences of their spoliations, I could account, though not on honorable principles in them, for their going to a certain point; but I never did believe, that they would declare an open war against us, or compel us, if they foresaw that would be the result, to declare it against them. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO GENERAL THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO.

Mount Vernon, 31 August, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Having just been informed of your safe arrival in America, I was on the point of writing to you a congratulatory letter on the occasion, welcoming you to the land, whose liberties you had been so instrumental in establishing, when I received your favor of the 23d instant from Philadelphia; for which, and the packet that you had the goodness to bear from Sir John Sinclair, I offer you my thanks.

I beg you to be assured, that no one has a higher respect and veneration for your character, than I have; and no one more sincerely wished, during your arduous struggle in the cause of liberty and your country, that it might be crowned with success. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and mortals must submit.

I pray you to believe, that at all times, and under any circumstances, it would make me happy to see you at my last retreat, from which I never expect to be more than twenty miles again. With great esteem, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

Mount Vernon, 8 October, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

This letter I hope and expect will be presented to you by your son, who is highly deserving of such parents as you and your amiable lady.

He can relate, much better than I can describe, my participation in your sufferings, my solicitude for your relief, the measures I adopted, though ineffectual, to facilitate your liberation from an unjust and cruel imprisonment, and the joy I experienced at the news of its accomplishment. I shall hasten, therefore, to congratulate you, and be assured that no one can do it with more cordiality, with more sincerity, or with greater affection, on the restoration of that liberty, which every act of your life entitles you to the enjoyment of; and I hope I may add, to the uninterrupted possession of your estates, and the confidence of your country. The repossession of these things, though they cannot compensate for the hardships you have endured, may nevertheless soften the painful remembrance of them.

From the delicate and responsible situation in which I stood as a public officer, but more especially from a misconception of the manner in which your son had left France, till explained to me in a personal interview with himself, he did not come immediately into my

family on his arrival in America, though he was assured in the first moments of it of my protection and support. His conduct, since he first set his feet on American ground, has been exemplary in every point of view, such as has gained him the esteem, affection, and confidence of all who have had the pleasure of his acquaintance. His filial affection and duty, and his ardent desire to embrace his parents and sisters in the first moments of their release, would not allow him to wait the authentic account of this much desired event; but, at the same time that I suggested the propriety of this, I could not withhold my assent to the gratification of his wishes to fly to the arms of those whom he holds most dear, persuaded as he is from the information he has received, that he shall find you all in Paris.

M. Frestel has been a true Mentor to George. No parent could have been more attentive to a favorite son; and he richly merits all that can be said of his virtues, of his good sense, and of his prudence. Both your son and he carry with them the vows and regrets of this family, and all who know them. And you may be assured, that yourself never stood higher in the affections of the people of this country, than at the present moment.*

Having bid a final adieu to the walks of public life, and meaning to withdraw myself from politics, I shall refer you to M. Frestel and George, who, at the same time that they have from prudential considerations avoided all interference in the politics of the country, cannot have been inattentive observers of what was passing among us, to give you a general view of our situation, and of the party, which in my opinion

* George W. Lafayette and M. Frestel sailed from New York for France on the 26th of October.

I pray you to believe, that at all times, and under any circumstances, it would make me happy to see you at my last retreat, from which I never expect to be more than twenty miles again. With great esteem, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

Mount Vernon, 8 October, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

This letter I hope and expect will be presented to you by your son, who is highly deserving of such parents as you and your amiable lady.

He can relate, much better than I can describe, my participation in your sufferings, my solicitude for your relief, the measures I adopted, though ineffectual, to facilitate your liberation from an unjust and cruel imprisonment, and the joy I experienced at the news of its accomplishment. I shall hasten, therefore, to congratulate you, and be assured that no one can do it with more cordiality, with more sincerity, or with greater affection, on the restoration of that liberty, which every act of your life entitles you to the enjoyment of; and I hope I may add, to the uninterrupted possession of your estates, and the confidence of your country. The repossession of these things, though they cannot compensate for the hardships you have endured, may nevertheless soften the painful remembrance of them.

From the delicate and responsible situation in which I stood as a public officer, but more especially from a misconception of the manner in which your son had left France, till explained to me in a personal interview with himself, he did not come immediately into my

when you say, "I observed in the Philadelphia papers mention made of a publication of a volume of your Epistles, Domestic, Confidential, and Official," unless it be the spurious letters, which issued from a certain press in New York during the war, with a view to destroy the confidence, which the army and community might have had in my political principles, and which have lately been republished, with greater eagerness and perseverance than ever, to answer the same nefarious purpose.

I suffered every attack, that was made upon my executive conduct (the one just mentioned among the rest), to pass unnoticed while I remained in public office, well knowing, that, if the general tenor of it would not stand the test of investigation, a newspaper vindication would be of little avail; but, as immense pains have been taken to disseminate these counterfeit letters, I conceived it a justice due to my own character and to posterity to disavow them in explicit terms; and this I did in a letter directed to the Secretary of State, to be filed in his office, the day on which I closed my administration. This letter has since been published in the gazettes by the head of that department.

With respect to your own request, I can say nothing. So many things are continually given to the public, of which I have no previous knowledge, nor time indeed to inspect them if I had been informed, that I may mistake the meaning of it. The late Secretary of State, now Vice-President, permitted a Mr. Carey, my consent having first been obtained, to take copies under his inspection of the letters I had written to Congress, which letters have since been published, and are, I presume, genuine, and must be those which you refer to. But as they are the work of another,

who is now in England on this business, I cannot suppose that you had it in contemplation to derive a benefit from his labors. I shall only add, therefore, that discretion in matters of this sort must be your guide, without a yea or nay from me.

For politics I shall refer you to the gazettes of this country, with which I presume you are acquainted, and with respect to other matters I have nothing, which would be entertaining or worth narrating. Mrs. Washington unites with me in best wishes for the health and happiness of yourself and Mrs. Gordon. I am, with esteem and respect, Sir, &c.

TO JOHN LANGHORNE

Mount Vernon, 15 October, 1797.

SIR,

Your favor of the 25th ultimo has been received, but not so soon as might have been expected from the date of it. For the favorable sentiments you have been pleased to express, relative to my conduct in public life, I thank you. For the divisions which have taken place among us, with respect to our political concerns, for the attacks which have been made upon those, to whom the administration of the government has been intrusted by the people, and for the calumnies which are levelled at all those, who are disposed to support the measures thereof, I feel, on public account, as much as any man can do, because in my opinion much evil and no good can result to this country from such conduct.

So far as these attacks are aimed at me personally, it is, I can assure you, Sir, a misconception, if it be supposed I feel the venom of the darts. Within me

I have a consolation, which proves an antidote against their utmost malignity, rendering my mind in the retirement I have long panted after perfectly tranquil.

I am, &c.*

TO GENERAL THADDEUS KOSCIUSZKO.

Mount Vernon, 25 October, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor, dated at Elizabethtown, has been duly received. I am sorry, that the state of your health should deprive me of the pleasure of your company at this place; and I regret still more that the pain you feel from the wounds you have received, though glorious for your reputation, is the occasion of it.

Whatever I can do as a private citizen, and in no other capacity can I now act consistently with the plan I have laid down for my future government, you may freely command. You will find, however, contrary as it may be to your expectation or wishes, that all pecuniary matters must flow from the legislature, and in a form which cannot be dispensed with. I may add, I am sure, that your claim upon the justice

* The name placed at the head of this letter was fictitious. A person, signing himself "JOHN LANGHORNE," had written to General Washington, with the insidious design of drawing from him remarks and opinions on political subjects, which might be turned to his injury, and promote the aims of a party. The fraud was detected by Mr. John Nicholas, who ascertained accidentally that a letter from General Washington was in the post-office at Charlottesville, in Albemarle County, directed to John Langhorne (a name unknown in that neighbourhood), and that it was sent for by a person, whose political connexions and sentiments were in harmony with the party, which had opposed the measures of Washington. The facts were communicated to him by Mr. Nicholas, and thus the plot was defeated. The letter of the pretended John Langhorne is contained in the APPENDIX, No. VIII.

and feelings of this country will meet with no delay. Nor do I suppose, that the loss of your certificate will be any impediment. Your rank and services in the American army are too well known to require that testimony of your claim, and the books of the Treasury will show, that you received nothing in discharge of it, or, if any part, to what amount. With the highest regard and respect, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

TO JOHN NICHOLAS.

Mount Vernon, 30 November, 1797.

SIR,

I know not how to thank you sufficiently, for the kind intention of your obliging favor of the 18th instant. If the object of Mr. Langhorne, who to me in personal character is an entire stranger, was such as you suspect, it will appear from my answer to his letter, that he fell far short of his mark. But as the writer of it seems to be better known to you, and that you may be the better enabled to form a more correct opinion of the design, I take the liberty of transmitting a copy of it along with the answer. If they should be a means of detecting any nefarious plan of those, who are assailing the government in every shape that can be devised, I shall feel happy in having had it in my power to furnish them. If the case be otherwise, the papers may be committed to the flames, and the transaction buried in oblivion. To confess the truth, I considered Mr. Langhorne in my "mind's eye" a pedant, who was desirous of displaying the flowers

* General Kosciuszko's claims were allowed by Congress, and an act was passed to that effect on the 23d of January, 1798.

of his pen. In either case, I would thank you for the result of the investigation.

In your journey to Philadelphia, or at any other time, or upon any occasion, I should be happy to see you at this place, having had a very high regard for your father while living, and a long acquaintance with him in public life as a member of the legislature of this State. With very great esteem, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN LUZAC.*

Mount Vernon, 2 December, 1797.

SIR,

The letter, for which I am indebted to your politeness, dated at Leyden the 10th of September, with the book which accompanied it, I had the pleasure to receive about three days since; and, in thanking you for both, I hasten to acknowledge the sense I have of the favorable sentiments you have been pleased to express of me.

To have steered my bark amid the intricacies of variegated public employment to a haven of rest with an approving conscience, and, while receiving the approbation of my own country for the part I have acted, to meet similar proofs of it from many of the moderate and virtuous of other countries, consummates my great-

---

* Professor in the University of Leyden. From the beginning of the American revolution, he had acted a zealous part in favor of the friends of liberty; and, as editor of the *Leyden Gazette* for many years, he had ably promulgated the principles of freedom, and defended the cause and conduct of those, who were struggling to establish them. To no pen in Europe were the United States so much indebted for a just representation of their affairs, and defence of their rights, as to that of Professor Luzac.

est wish and all my ambition, and in my eye is more precious than any thing, that power or riches could have bestowed.

In times of turbulence, when the passions are afloat, calm reason is swallowed up in the extremes to which measures are attempted to be carried; but, when those subside, and its empire is resumed, the man who acts from principle, who pursues the paths of truth, moderation, and justice, will regain his influence. Such, I persuade myself, will be, if it has not already been, your case.

To the writings and conduct of men of this description, amongst whom you have always been placed, America is much indebted. And as a private citizen, for that is the class in which I now move, I offer you my thanks for the part you have acted, and for the facts you have been pleased to record of one, who with pleasure subscribes himself your most obedient, &c.

TO M. DE LACOLOMBE.*

Mount Vernon, 3 December, 1797.

SIR,

Your favor of the 21st ultimo came duly to hand. For the pleasing and interesting contents of it I offer you my best thanks, notwithstanding I received by the same mail similar accounts from our ministers at London and the Hague, enclosing extracts of letters to them from the consul of the United States at Hamburg.

I congratulate you on the happy event of the liberation of our mutual friend, General Lafayette, whose

---

* Now in Philadelphia. He had been adjutant-general under Lafayette, when the latter commanded the National Guard. See *Mémoires Historiques sur M. de Lafayette*, p. 249.

reception in this country will be, I am sure, cordial from all descriptions of people; from none more than myself.

The answer given by him to the minister is noble, and worthy of himself.* The only regret I should feel on his arrival in America, if it should happen soon, would be his disappointment at not finding his son here. I said all I could with decency, both to him and M. Frestel, to induce their awaiting direct accounts from the prisoners before their departure; but the eagerness of the former to embrace his parents in the first moments of their release from a cruel imprisonment was not to be restrained. Among other arguments I observed, that, although it was not probable, yet it was at least possible, that they might be crossing the ocean in different directions at the same time. Unfortunate indeed would this be for both, especially the son, should it so happen. Slow travelling, and a little delay at Hamburg of General Lafayette and family, may give time for the arrival of the son at Havre; and I hope it will be the case, for the shock must be great to both parties, if they should pass each other. With esteem and regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Mount Vernon, 4 December, 1797.

DEAR SIR,

Your very interesting and obliging favor of the 15th of September from the Hague came duly to hand, and I thank you sincerely for the important details, with which it is fraught, and pray for the continuation of them.

---

* See this answer in the APPENDIX, No. IX.

I congratulate you too on your safe arrival from shipboard, and, as the newspapers tell us, at Paris;* and I wish in a little while hence I may have it in my power to do the same on the favorable conclusion of your embassy, and happy return to your family and friends in this country. To predict the contrary might be as unjust, as it would be impolitic. Be the issue, however, what it may, three things I shall be perfectly satisfied of; and these are, that nothing which justice, sound reasoning, and fair representation would require, will be wanting to render it just and honorable; and, if it is not so, that the eyes of all in this country, who are not wilfully blind and resolved to remain so, some from one motive and some from another, will be fully opened; and, lastly, that if the French Directory proceed on the supposition, that the parties in these United States are nearly equal, and that one of them would advocate their measures in the dernier resort, they will greatly deceive themselves. The mass of our citizens require no more than to understand a question to decide it properly, and an adverse conclusion of the negotiation will effect this. Indeed, I believe it may be said with truth, that a very great change in the public mind has taken place already. The leaders, it is true, attempt to keep up the ball, which is evidently declining; but as both Houses of Congress have formed quorums, and received the President's speech, the response of the representative branch will be some criterion by which this opinion of mine may be tried, though not a conclusive one.

The situation of things in Holland is a good lesson for us, if we are disposed to profit by it; but unfortunately the nature of man is such, that the experience

* As one of the envoys from the United States, in conjunction with Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and Elbridge Gerry.

of others is not attended to as it ought to be. We must *feel*, ourselves, before we can think or perceive the danger that threatens us. But, as this letter, after it quits the office of the Secretary of State, to whose care I shall send it, may pass through many hands, I shall dwell very little on European politics. It is laughable enough, however, to behold those men amongst us, who were using the severest terms of reprobation, and sounding the tocsin upon every occasion, that a wild imagination could torture into a stretch of power or unconstitutionality in the executive of the United States, all of a sudden become the warm advocates of those high-handed measures of the French Directory, which succeeded the arrests on the 4th of September; and this, too, without denying that the barriers of the constitution, under which they acted, have been overleaped, but that they have done it on the ground of tender mercy and an unwillingness to shed blood. But so it always has been, and I presume ever will be with men, who are governed more by passion and party views, than by the dictates of justice, temperance, and sound policy. If there were good grounds to suspect, that the proscribed and banished characters were engaged in a conspiracy against the constitution of the people's choice, to seize them even in an irregular manner might be justified upon the ground of expediency and of self-preservation; but, after they were secured and amenable to the laws, to condemn them without a hearing, and consign them to punishment more rigorous perhaps than death, is the summit of despotism.

Young Lafayette, too fondly led by his eagerness to embrace his parents and sisters, in the first moments of their release from prison, and unintentionally deceived into a belief, by premature accounts from his

friends at Hamburg, that this event had actually taken place, embarked for this purpose on the 26th of October at New York for Havre de Grace. Since which, official accounts having been received of the terms on which his liberation was granted by the Emperor, the meeting in Europe is become problematical; a circumstance, should it happen, which will be sorely regretted on both sides. I said all I could to induce him to wait here until he should receive direct advice from his father; but his impatience, on the one hand, and his confidence in the information he had received, that his parents were on their way to Paris, on the other, his apprehensions from a winter's passage, and a belief that he should not be ill received in France, even if they were not there, turned the scale against my opinion and advice, that he should postpone his departure until he heard from him or one of the family.

With very great esteem and regard, I remain, dear Sir, &c,

TO CLEMENT BIDDLE.

Mount Vernon, 3 March, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Since writing to you on the 27th and 28th ultimo, your letter of the 22d has been received. I should be glad to know, as soon as you are able to furnish me with the means of judging, whether it will be best to buy Oznabergs or Tecklenbergs in Alexandria, or to send to Philadelphia for them; or to know if I should await the result of your inquiries and information.

I have already left it to your own judgment to fix a period for selling the old coach, and I repeat it. You will have perceived, however, that the expenses

thereon are accumulating; whilst in all probability the carriage is growing worse and worse in its appearance. The account which has been exhibited for keeping it, if the charge is not unusual, must be paid. To me it appears very high.

I prefer having the Encyclopedia (the second set) bound in gilt calf, and I hope it will be done neatly. When put into your hands, and the account rendered to me, the money shall be immediately paid. The sooner I shall receive them, the more agreeable it will be to me.

I have already employed a young man to come to me as a clerk; but a blacksmith, if one of good appearance and character could be had as a redemptioner, would suit me well, provided he is well acquainted with the construction of farming implements, shoeing horses, and the like. With esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

TO JOHN NICHOLAS.

Mount Vernon, 8 March, 1798.

SIR,

The letter, which you did me the favor of writing to me under date of the 22d ultimo, came safe to hand. Nothing short of the evidence you have adduced, corroborative of intimations which I had received long before through another channel, could have

* It may not be amiss to state here, that in the letter-books and on file is a large correspondence between Washington and Mr. Biddle, extending through many years; but, as it is wholly on matters of business, and much of it taken up with details possessing a temporary interest only to the parties, it has not been found suited to the objects of the present work. It proves, however, the close intimacy that existed between them during a period of more than twenty years, and the unlimited confidence placed by Washington in the integrity, ability, and friendship of Mr. Biddle.

shaken my belief in the sincerity of a friendship, which I had conceived was possessed for me by the person* to whom you allude. But attempts to injure those, who are supposed to stand well in the estimation of the people, and are stumblingblocks in the way, by misrepresenting their political tenets, thereby to destroy all confidence in them, are among the means by which the government is to be assailed, and the constitution destroyed. The conduct of this party is systematized; and every thing that is opposed to its execution will be sacrificed without hesitation or remorse, if the end can be answered by it.

If the person whom you *suspect* was really the author of the letter under the signature of *John Langhorne*, it is not at all surprising to me, that the correspondence should have ended where it did; for the penetration of *that man* would have perceived by the first glance at the answer, that nothing was to be drawn from that mode of attack. In what form the next insidious attempts may appear, remains to be discovered. But as the attempts to explain away the constitution, and weaken the government, are now become so open, and the desire of placing the affairs of this country under the influence and control of a foreign nation is so apparent and strong, it is hardly to be expected that a resort to covert means to effect these objects will be longer regarded.

With respect to Mr. Monroe's "*View of the Conduct of the Executive of the United States*," I shall say but little,† because, as he has *called* it a "View" thereof, I shall leave it to the tribunal to which he himself has appealed to decide, first, how far a correspondence with one of its agents is entitled to the unqualified term he has employed; secondly, how, if

* Mr. Jefferson. † See APPENDIX, No. X.

it is not, it is to exhibit a *view* thereof; thirdly, how far his instructions and the letters he has received from that executive, through the constitutional organ, and to which he refers, can be made to subserve the *great points*, which he and his party are evidently aiming at, namely, to impress upon the public mind, that favoritism towards Great Britain has produced a dereliction, in the administration, of good will towards France.

As to the propriety of exposing to public view his private instructions and correspondence with his own government, nothing needs be said; for I should suppose, that the measure must be reprobated by the well-informed and intelligent of all nations, and not less by his abettors in this country, if they were not blinded by party views, and determined at all hazards to catch at any thing, that in their opinion will promote them. The mischievous and dangerous tendency of such a practice is too glaring to require a comment.

If the executive, in the opinion of the gentleman you have alluded to, is chargeable with "premeditating the destruction of Mr. Monroe in his appointment, because he was the *centre* around which the republican party *rallied* in the Senate"* (a circumstance quite new to me), it is to be hoped he will give it credit for its lenity towards that gentleman, in having designated several others, not of the Senate, as victims to this office *before* the sacrifice of Mr. Monroe was ever had in contemplation. As this must be some consolation to him and his friends, I hope they will embrace it.

But as you have given me assurances of a visit at

* Mr. Nicholas said in his letter, that this declaration was made in his hearing by Mr. Jefferson.

this place, with Governor Wood, in the spring, which is now commencing, I shall only add, that, with esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 27 March, 1798.

Dear Sir,

Your favor came safe and in due time. For the information contained in it I thank you. Your request was immediately complied with, as every one of a similar nature shall be.

A report is circulated in Alexandria and its vicinity, transmitted, it is said, in private letters from Philadelphia, that a correspondence has been discovered, or more properly letters have been intercepted, from some member of Congress to the Directory of France, of a treasonable nature, containing, among other matters, advice not to receive our envoys; on the contrary, to menace us with hostile appearances, and they might rely upon bringing the United States to their feet. The name of the person has been mentioned to me.

Cruel must these reports be if unfounded, and, if well founded, what punishment can be too great for the actors in so diabolical a drama? The period is big with events, but what it will produce is beyond the reach of human ken. On this, as upon all other occasions, I hope the best. It has always been my belief, that Providence has not led us so far in the path of independence of one nation, to throw us into the arms of another; and that the machinations of those, who are attempting it, will sooner or later recoil upon their own heads. Heaven grant it may soon happen upon all those, whose conduct deserves it.

With truth I am always yours, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 6 May, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Amongst the variety of matters, which have come before Congress for the purpose of preparation in the dernier resort, in short, as a salutary measure at all times and under all circumstances, arsenals and cannon founderies have occupied its attention.

This leads me to ask, what steps have been taken relative to the site for one at the mouth of the Shenandoah. I will pledge myself, that there is not a spot in the United States, which combines more or greater requisites for these, than that does, considered either as a place of immense strength, or as inaccessible by an enemy. It is open to inland navigation in all directions, as well crosswise as to the shipping-port at the Federal City and water transportation to the western country. It is situated among furnaces and forges, with an inexhaustible supply of water, having the whole river of Shenandoah as a resource, and a populous and plentiful country around it.

I do not suppose, that a place of this importance, which has already cost the United States several thousand dollars (to be possessed of the ground), has passed unnoticed; but, not having heard it mentioned in the progress of the discussions, or that any thing has been done on the premises since the purchase of it under the former act, I am induced to make this inquiry, which you will answer or not, as suits your convenience; as I doubt not that you have matters of more importance to attend to, than the solution of my questions.

I am always your affectionate, &c.

TO MRS. S. FAIRFAX.*

Mount Vernon, 16 May, 1798.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Five and twenty years have nearly passed away, since I have considered myself as permanently residing at this place, or have been in a situation to indulge myself in a familiar intercourse with my friends by letter or otherwise.

During this period, so many important events have occurred, and such changes in men and things have taken place, as the compass of a letter would give you but an inadequate idea of. None of which events, however, nor all of them together, have been able to eradicate from my mind the recollection of those happy moments, the happiest of my life, which I have enjoyed in your company.

Worn out in a manner by the toils of my past labor, I am again seated under my vine and fig-tree, and wish I could add, that there are none to make us afraid; but those, whom we have been accustomed to call our good friends and allies, are endeavouring, if not to make us afraid, yet to despoil us of our property, and are provoking us to acts of self-defence, which may lead to war. What will be the result of such measures, time, that faithful expositor of all things, must disclose. My wish is to spend the remainder of my days, which cannot be many, in rural amusements, free from the cares from which public responsibility is never exempt.

Before the war, and even while it existed, although I was eight years from home at one stretch, except the *en-passant* visits made to it on my marches to

* Formerly resident near Mount Vernon, but now living in England.

and from the siege of Yorktown, I made considerable additions to my dwellinghouses, and alterations in my offices and gardens; but the dilapidation occasioned by time, and those neglects, which are coextensive with the absence of proprietors, have occupied as much of my time within the last twelve months in repairing them, as at any former period in the same space; and it is matter of sore regret, when I cast my eyes towards Belvoir, which I often do, to reflect, that the former inhabitants of it, with whom we lived in such harmony and friendship, no longer reside there, and that the ruins can only be viewed as the memento of former pleasures. Permit me to add, that I have wondered often, your nearest relations being in this country, that you should not prefer spending the evening of your life among them, rather than close the sublunary scene in a foreign country, numerous as your acquaintances may be, and sincere as the friendships you may have formed.

A century hence, if this country keeps united (and it is surely its policy and interest to do it), will produce a city, though not as large as London, yet of a magnitude inferior to few others in Europe, on the banks of the Potomac, where one is now establishing for the permanent seat of the government of the United States, between Alexandria and Georgetown, on the Maryland side of the river; a situation not excelled, for commanding prospect, good water, salubrious air, and safe harbour, by any in the world; and where elegant buildings are erecting and in forwardness for the reception of Congress in the year 1800.

Alexandria, within the last seven years, since the establishment of the general government, has increased in buildings, in population, in the improvement of its

streets by well-executed pavements, and in the extension of its wharves, in a manner of which you can have very little idea. This show of prosperity, you will readily conceive, is owing to its commerce. The extension of that trade is occasioned, in a great degree, by the opening of the inland navigation of the Potomac River, now cleared to Fort Cumberland, upwards of two hundred miles, and by a similar attempt to accomplish the like up the Shenandoah, one hundred and eighty miles more. In a word, if this country can steer clear of European politics, stand firm on its bottom, and be wise and temperate in its government, it bids fair to be one of the greatest and happiest nations in the world.

Knowing that Mrs. Washington is about to give an account of the changes, which have happened in the neighbourhood and in our own family, I shall not trouble you with a repetition of them. I am, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Mount Vernon, 27 May, 1798.

My dear Sir,

Yesterday brought me your letter of the 19th instant. You may be assured, that my mind is deeply impressed with the present situation of our public affairs, and not a little agitated by the outrageous conduct of France towards the United States, and at the unparalleled conduct of its partisans, who aid and abet their measures. You may believe further, from assurances equally sincere, that if there was any thing in my power, which could be done with consistency, to avert or lessen the danger of the crisis, it should be rendered with hand and heart.

But, my dear Sir, dark as matters appear at present, and expedient as it is to be prepared at all points for the worst that can happen, and no one is more disposed to this measure than I am, I cannot make up my mind yet for the expectation of *open war*, or, in other words, for a formidable invasion by France. I cannot believe, although I think them capable of any thing bad, that they will attempt to do more than they have done; or that, when they perceive the spirit and policy of this country rising into resistance, and that they have falsely calculated upon support from a large part of the *people* thereof to promote their views and influence in it, they will not desist even from those practices, unless unexpected events in Europe, and their possession of Louisiana and the Floridas, should induce them to continue the measure. And I believe further, that, although the *leaders* of their party in this country will not change their sentiments, they will be obliged nevertheless to change their plan, or the mode of carrying it on, from the effervescence which is appearing in all quarters, and from the desertion of their followers, which must frown them into silence, at least for a while.

If I did not view things in this light, my mind would be infinitely more disquieted than it is; for, if a crisis should arrive, when a sense of duty or a call from my country should become so imperious, as to leave me no choice, I should prepare for the relinquishment, and go with as much reluctance from my present peaceful abode, as I should do to the tomb of my ancestors.

To say at this time, determinately, what I should do under such circumstances, might be improper, having once before departed from a similar resolution; but I may declare *to you*, that, as there is no

conviction in my breast, that I could serve my country with more efficiency in the command of the armies it might levy than many others, an expression of its wish that I should do so must somehow or other be unequivocally known, to satisfy my mind, that, notwithstanding the respect in which I may be held on account of former services, a preference might not be given to a man more in his prime; and it might well be supposed, too, that I should like previously to know who would be my coadjutors, and whether you would be disposed to take an active part, if arms are to be resorted to.*

Before this letter can get to your hands, you will have seen the resolutions and proposed address from citizens of Charleston in South Carolina. Their proceedings will, I am persuaded, give the tone to other parts of that State. Two or three very good addresses have already appeared from North Carolina, one with the signature of the late Governor Spaight. All the most popular and hardy yeomanry of this State have come and are coming forward, with strong addresses to the executive and assurances of support. The address from Norfolk is a good one. The middle counties of this State, with two or three exceptions, have hitherto been silent. They want leaders; but I shall be much mistaken, if a large majority of them do not forsake, if they have heretofore been with those, who

* *From Mr. Hamilton's Letter.*—"You ought to be aware, my dear Sir, that, in the event of an open rupture with France, the public voice will again call you to command the armies of your country; and, though all who are attached to you will from attachment, as well as public considerations, deplore an occasion which should once more tear you from that repose to which you have so good a right, yet it is the opinion of all those with whom I converse, that you will be compelled to make the sacrifice. All your past labors may demand, to give them efficacy, this further, this very great sacrifice."—*May 19th.*

have pretended to speak their sentiments. As to the resolutions, which were entered into at Fredericksburg, it is only necessary to point to the manager of them, and add that the meeting was partial.

From Georgia no developement of the public sentiment has yet appeared; but I learn from an intelligent gentleman just returned from where he has been some time for the benefit of his health, travelling, going and returning slowly, and making considerable halts, that the people of that State, as also those of South and North Carolina, seem to be actuated by one spirit, and that a very friendly one to the general government. I have likewise heard, that the present governor of Georgia professes to be strongly attached to it. These disclosures, with what may yet be expected, will, I conceive, give a different impression of the sentiments of our people to the Directory of France, than what they have been taught to believe, while they must serve to abash the partisans of it for their wicked and presumptive misinformation.

Your free communications, on these political topics, is so far from needing an apology, that I shall be much gratified and thankful to you for the continuation of them; and I would wish you to believe, that, with great truth and sincerity, I am always your affectionate friend, &c.

TO JOSEPH HOPKINSON.

Mount Vernon, 27 May, 1798.

SIR,

An absence for more than eight days from home, on a visit to our friends in the Federal City, is offered as an apology for my not giving your polite and

obliging favor of the 9th instant an earlier acknowledgment.

I pray you now, my good Sir, to accept my best thanks for the pamphlet, and the song which accompanied it, and still more for the favorable sentiments you have been pleased to express in my behalf. To expect that all men should think alike upon political, more than religious or other subjects, would be to look for a change in the order of nature; but, at so dangerous a crisis as the present, when every thing dear to independence is at stake, the well-disposed part of them might, one would think, act more alike. Opposition, therefore, to the will of the majority, and to that self-respect which is due to the national character, cannot but seem strange.

But I will unite with you in a fervent wish and hope, that greater unanimity than heretofore may prevail, (for enough I think we have seen to remove the mist entirely,) and that the young men of the present day will not suffer the liberty, for which their forefathers fought, bled, and died, to be lost by them, either by supineness, or divisions among themselves, disgraceful to the country. I am, Sir, &c.

TO EDWARD CARRINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 30 May, 1798.

Dear Sir,

The present dangerous crisis of public affairs makes me anxious to know the sentiments of our citizens in different parts of this commonwealth; and no one has a better opportunity to form an opinion of the central part thereof than yourself. This will be my apology for giving you the trouble of a letter at this time.

Several counties above the Blue Ridge have come forward with warm addresses and strong professions of support. From Norfolk two meetings (the one *good*, the other *bad*,) have had their proceedings detailed in the gazettes. Meetings have taken place in a few of the middle counties with unpromising results; and an invitation was given for one in Dayis's paper of the 15th, to be held in Richmond; but I have heard nothing more concerning it. Let not any inquiries or gratifications of mine interfere with your more important concerns. The devotion of a moment or two of leisure will suffice for, dear Sir, &c.

TO JEREMY BELKNAP.

Mount Vernon, 15 June, 1798.

REVEREND SIR,

Your favor of the 29th ultimo, accompanying the Discourse delivered on the day recommended by the President of the United States to be observed for a fast, was received in the usual course of the mail from Boston, and the copies therewith sent were forwarded agreeably to your desire.

My best wishes attend the prosecution of your AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY; and, not recollecting whether the request was made before, I desire I may be considered as a subscriber to the first volume. To the proposal, which came under cover to me, I have fixed my name, and will lodge the paper in the hands of a gentleman in Alexandria for the convenience of those, who may incline to become subscribers thereto. It will thereafter be returned to you.

My information, relative to the family of Calvert, is more limited than that detailed by you. I know

little more of it, than what is recited in the history of Virginia; but I will send a transcript of so much of your letter, as relates to this subject, to a well-informed gentleman of my acquaintance in Maryland, Judge Chase, and give you the result.*

I know of no other histories of Virginia, than those mentioned in your letter; but I recollect well to have heard the late Richard Bland, of Prince George County, say before the revolution, that he was either possessed of or was collecting materials, and hoped to furnish a more correct history of it, than any that was then extant. He was very competent to the undertaking, being a man of erudition and intelligence, long a member of the councils of this State, and afterwards a member of the first Congresses that were held in Philadelphia. I cannot add, however, that he was the author of the manuscript transmitted to you by Carter B. Harrison. Colonel Bland, the person of whom I am speaking, has been dead more than twenty years. Bishop Madison, with whom you seem to be in the habit of corresponding, is as likely to give information on the point sought after by you as any person I am acquainted with. To the descendant of a gentleman, (the Honorable Richard Corbin, many years deceased,) who it is said possessed some valuable notes relative to ancient transactions, and the actors of those times

* In writing to Judge Chase on this subject he said; "As the Reverend Dr. Belknap is a man of character and abilities, who writes well and seems anxious to be correct in what he gives to the world, he merits encouragement and aid from those, who have it in their power to afford them." These generous efforts were not destined, however, to be available for the object desired. Dr. Belknap died suddenly on the 20th of June, only five days after the above letter was written, having contributed more than any writer that went before him to illustrate the history of his country, and by his example to promote in others the habit of discriminating and accurate research.

in this State, I will write; and if any thing worthy of notice is obtained, you shall be furnished therewith.

If I can render you any service in procuring materials for your valuable BIOGRAPHY, I shall feel pleasure in doing it. I hope both life and health will be dispensed to you by Him, in whose hands all things are, until this and many others of your good works are completed. For the Discourse, which you were so obliging as to send, and for the favorable sentiments with which it was accompanied, I pray you to accept the best thanks of, Sir, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mount Vernon, 17 June, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

I have heard with much pleasure, that you contemplate a visit to the city designated for the permanent seat of government of the United States, in the course of the summer or early in autumn.

It is unnecessary, I hope, for me in that event to express the satisfaction it would give Mrs. Washington and me to see Mrs. Adams, yourself, and company in the shade of our vine and fig-tree; but I shall request, that, while you remain in these parts, you will make Mount Vernon your head-quarters. It is but about seventeen miles by land, and less by water, from the Federal City; and only half that distance from Alexandria, which is on the direct route between them.

I pray you to believe, that no one has read the various approbatory addresses, which have been presented to you, with more heartfelt satisfaction than I have done; nor are there any, who more sincerely

wish that your administration of the government may be easy, happy, and honorable to yourself, and prosperous for the country.

Present, if you please, the best respects of Mrs. Washington, Miss Custis, and myself to Mrs. Adams and Miss Smith. Accept them yourself, and be assured of the high esteem and regard, with which I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES

Mount Vernon, 4 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Not being in the habit, since my return to private life, of sending regularly to the post-office, nine miles from hence, every post-day, it often happens that letters addressed to me lie longer there on that account, than they otherwise would do.

I have delayed no time unnecessarily since I had the honor of receiving your very obliging favor of the 22d ultimo, to thank you for the polite and flattering sentiments you have been pleased to express relatively to me, and to assure you, that, as far as it is in my power to support your administration, and to render it easy, happy, and honorable, you may command me without reserve.*

At the epoch of my retirement, an invasion of these States by any European power, or even the proba-

* On the 28th of May a law was passed by Congress, authorizing the President, "in the event of a declaration of war against the United States, or of actual invasion of their territory by a foreign power, or of imminent danger of such invasion discovered in his opinion to exist, before the next session of Congress, to cause to be enlisted, and to call into actual service, a number of troops not exceeding ten thousand non-

bility of such an event happening in my days, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception that that or any other occurrence would arise in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shades of Mount Vernon. But this seems to be the age of wonders; and it is reserved for intoxicated and lawless France (for purposes of Providence far beyond the reach of human ken) to slaughter its own citizens, and to disturb the repose of all the world besides.

From a view of the past and the present, and from the prospect of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide satisfactorily on the part it might best become me to act. In case of *actual invasion* by a formidable force, I certainly should not intrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country to assist in repelling it. And if there be good cause, which must be better known to the government than to private citizens, to expect such an event, delay in preparing for it might be dangerous, improper, and not to be justified by prudence. The uncertainty, however, of the event, in my mind, creates my embarrassment; for I cannot fairly bring it to believe, regardless as the French are of treaties and of the laws of nations, and capable as I conceive them to be of any species of despotism and injustice, that they

---

commissioned officers, musicians, and privates, to be enlisted for a term not exceeding three years." Authority was also given to the President to organize the army, with a suitable number of major-generals and other officers, into corps of artillery, cavalry, and infantry; and, in short, to make every arrangement for preparing the forces for actual service This was called a *Provisional Army*. The measure was adopted in consequence of the threatening aspect of affairs between France and the United States. The causes and particulars are briefly stated in MARSHALL's *Life of Washington*, Vol. V. pp. 735—746.

will attempt to invade this country, after such a uniform and unequivocal expression of the sense of the people in all parts to oppose them with their lives and fortunes.

That they have been led to believe, by their agents and partisans amongst us, that we are a divided people, that the latter are opposed to their own government, and that a show of a small force would occasion a revolt, I have no doubt; and how far these men, grown desperate, will further attempt to deceive, and may succeed in keeping up the deception, is problematical. Without this, the folly of the Directory in such an attempt would, I conceive, be more conspicuous, if possible, than their wickedness.

Having with candor made this disclosure of the state of my mind, it remains only that I should add, that to those who know me best it is best known, that, if imperious circumstances should induce me to renounce the smooth paths of retirement for the thorny ways of public life, at a period too when repose is most congenial to nature, and a calm indispensable to contemplation, it would be productive of sensations, which can be more easily conceived than expressed.

The difficulty in which you expect to be involved, in the choice of general officers, when you come to form the army, is certainly a serious one; and, in a government like ours, where there are so many considerations to be attended to and combined, it will be found not a little perplexing. But, as the mode of carrying on the war against the foe that threatens must differ widely from that practised in the contest for independence, it will not be an easy matter, I conceive, to find, among the *old set* of generals, men of sufficient activity, energy, and health, and of sound politics, to train troops to the "quick step," long

marches, and severe conflicts they may have to encounter; and, therefore, that recourse must be had, for the greater part at least, to the well-known, most experienced, best proved and intelligent officers of the late army.

I speak with diffidence, however, on this head, having no list by me from which my memory could be refreshed. There is one thing though, on which I can give a decided opinion; and, as it is of the utmost importance to the public, to the army, and to the officer commanding it, be he who he may, I will take the liberty of suggesting it now. It is, that the greatest circumspection be used in appointing the general staff. If this corps is not composed of respectable characters, who have a knowledge of the duties of their respective departments, able, active, and firm, and of incorruptible integrity and prudence, and withal such as the commander-in-chief can place entire confidence in, his plans and movements, if not defeated altogether, may be so embarrassed and retarded, as to amount nearly to the same thing; and this almost with impunity on their part.

The opening given me in your letter is such, as has prompted me to express these sentiments with freedom; and persuading myself, that you will ascribe them to pure motives, although they may differ from your own ideas, I have no doubt of their being well received. With the greatest respect and consideration I have the honor to be, dear Sir, &c.*

* In the event of a war, the opinion was universally entertained, that Washington must be called on to take the command of the armies. The weight of his name and character was of the utmost importance to produce unanimity in the leaders, and to secure the confidence and support of the people. His extreme aversion to enter again into public life was known; but it was likewise well understood, that it was a principle with him, from which he had never deviated, that, when his ser-

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 4 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 26th ultimo propounds a very serious, interesting, and important question to me; a question that might have been answered with less delay, if I had been as much in the habit since, as before I became a private citizen, of sending regularly to the post-office on post days for letters.*

The sentiments, which I mean to express to you in this letter on the subject of yours, shall be frank, undisguised, and explicit; for I see, as you do, that clouds

---

vices were demanded by the general voice of his fellow-citizens, he never refused to bestow them. Upon this principle he had acted through life, and it was believed he would still adhere to it. Under this conviction, therefore, the President had undoubtedly made up his mind to nominate him to the Senate in any event, both because he was the best man, and because the nation would not be satisfied with any other course, even if there was a strong presumption, that the appointment would not be accepted.

"In forming an army," said the President, in his letter to which the above is an answer, "whenever I must come to that extremity, I am at an immense loss whether to call on all the old generals, or to appoint a young set. If the French come here, we must learn to march with a quick step, and to attack, for in that way only they are said to be vulnerable. I must tax you sometimes for advice. We must have your name, if you will in any case permit us to use it. There will be more efficacy in it, than in many an army."

Before the above answer to the President's letter was received by him, that is, on the 2d of July, he nominated to the Senate "George Washington, of Mount Vernon, to be lieutenant-general and commander-in-chief of all the armies raised and to be raised in the United States." The nomination was unanimously confirmed by the Senate the next day.

* *From Mr. McHenry's Letter.* — "You see how the storm thickens, and that our vessel will soon require its ancient pilot. Will you, — may we flatter ourselves, that, in a crisis so awful and important, you will accept the command of all our armies? I hope you will, because you alone can unite all hearts and all hands, if it is possible that they can be united." — *June 26th.*

are gathering, and that a storm may ensue; and I find, too, from a variety of hints, that my quiet under these circumstances does not promise to be of long continuance.

It cannot be necessary for me to premise to you, or to others, who know my sentiments as well, that, to quit the tranquil walks of retirement, and enter a boundless field of responsibility and trouble, would be productive of sensations, which a better pen than I possess would find it difficult to describe. Nevertheless, the principles by which my conduct has been actuated through life would not suffer me, in any great emergency, to withhold any services I could render, required by my country; especially in a case, where its dearest rights are assailed by lawless ambition and intoxicated power, contrary to every principle of justice, and in violation of solemn compacts and laws, which govern all civilized nations; and this, too, with the obvious intent to sow thick the seeds of disunion, for the purpose of subjugating the government, and destroying our independence and happiness.

In circumstances like these, accompanied by an actual invasion of our territorial rights, it would be difficult at any time for me to remain an idle spectator under the plea of age or retirement. With sorrow, it is true, I should quit the shades of my peaceful abode, and the ease and happiness I now enjoy, to encounter anew the turmoils of war, to which, possibly, my strength and powers might be found incompetent. These, however, should not be stumbling-blocks in *my own* way; but there are other things highly important for me to ascertain and settle, before I could give a decided answer to your question.

First, the propriety in the opinion of the public, so far as that opinion has been expressed in conversation,

of my appearing again on a public theatre, after declaring the sentiments I did in my Valedictory Address, of September, 1796.

Secondly, a conviction in my own breast, from the best information that can be obtained, that it is the wish of my country, that the military force of it should be committed to my charge; and,

Thirdly, that the army now to be formed should be so appointed, as to afford a well-grounded hope of its doing honor to the country, and credit to him who commands it in the field.

On each of these heads you must allow me to make observations.

With respect to the first, it will readily be admitted, under the circumstances I at present am, that nothing short of an imperious call would or ought to draw me from retirement; and, unless this was apparent, the advantages, if any are expected from the measure, would not only be weakened, but might be defeated altogether. For the opposers of government, with a view to lessen its influence, would denounce it at once as a restless act, evincing my discontent in retirement, and that my love for it was all a sham. Knowing the purity of my own intentions, such observations would make no impression on my personal feelings, but the necessity thereof in the eyes of the public ought to be unequivocal; for it would be uncandid in me not to confess, that, although I highly approve of all the defensive and precautionary measures that have been adopted, and wish they had been more energetic, yet I cannot believe, since the *people* of this country, on whose defection the calculation was made, have come forward with such strong and unequivocal assurances to defend at all hazards their government and independence, maugre the attempts to divert them

from it, that the Directory of France, intoxicated and abandoned as it is, will have the folly to invade our territorial rights, otherwise than by predatory attempts on the sea-board; unless their agents and partisans among us, in defiance of the evidence of their senses, should still have the wickedness and address to make that government believe, that nothing but a force to give countenance to its friends is wanting to effectuate all they wish. This, Sir, is my opinion, with respect to a *formidable invasion*. Perhaps, with the information and lights in possession of the executive, I might think differently.

On the second head I shall be more concise, because, as my whole life has been dedicated to my country in one shape or another, for the poor remains of it, it is not an object to contend for ease and quiet, when all that is valuable in it is at stake, further than to be satisfied that the sacrifice I should make of these is acceptable and desired by my country. As neither ambition, interest, nor personal gratification of any sort could induce me to quit the walks of private life, to be disappointed in the only object I should have in view would be mortifying beyond my powers of utterance. And what this public opinion and wish are, on this occasion, I know not; for I have studiously avoided touching on the subject, lest some inference contrary to my meaning should be drawn from it.

I express these ideas not from affectation, for I despise every thing that carries that appearance, but from the belief, that, as it is the fashion of the present day, set or adopted by the French (with whom we are to contend), and with great and astonishing success too, to appoint generals of juvenile years to lead their armies, it might not be impossible, that similar ideas and wishes might pervade the minds of our citizens.

And to this a fear might be added, that age may have wrought too powerfully on my body and mind, to make it advisable to commit so important a trust to my direction.

On the third head you must permit me to dwell a little more at large. If an army was in existence, and an officer invited to take the command of it, his course would be plain, for he would have nothing more to do than to examine the constitution of it, and to inquire into its composition, to enable him to decide; but we have one to form, and much indeed depends on its formation. If a judicious choice is not made of the principal officers, and above all, of the general staff, in the first instance, it never can be rectified thereafter. The character, then, of the army would be lost in the superstructure. The reputation of the commander-in-chief would sink with it, and the country be involved in inextricable expense.

It is impossible, I know, for the executive to be intimately acquainted with the qualifications of the battalion officers; and perhaps, from the manner in which the volunteer corps may offer themselves, little will be left to his choice. The presumption however is, that, as these corps will be composed of respectable citizens, the officers will be good, and worthy of as much confidence as can be placed in untried men. The great desiderata lie in the appointment of the general officers of the line, and of the staff, particularly the latter; and the first consists in a great measure in determining whether they shall be taken from the *old set* of generals, or formed anew from the most experienced, intelligent, and best proved officers of the American army, without regard to grade.

From the want of the list, which I left in the Presidential office, by which my memory could be refreshed

as to names, it would be hazardous, and might be improper, to give a decided opinion on this head; but I have no great scruple in saying, that I incline strongly to the latter mode; for, if this country is seriously invaded, our system of warfare must be the very reverse of the last.

To remark to a military man, how all-important the general staff of an army is to its well-being, and how essential consequently to the commander-in-chief, seems to be unnecessary; and yet a good choice is of such immense consequence, that I must be allowed to explain myself.

The inspector-general, quartermaster-general, adjutant-general, and officer commanding the corps of artillerists and engineers, ought to be men of the most respectable character, and of first-rate abilities; because, from the nature of their respective offices, and from their being always about the commander-in-chief, who is obliged to intrust many things to them *confidentially*, scarcely any movement can take place without their knowledge. It follows, then, that, besides possessing the qualifications just mentioned, they ought to have those of integrity and prudence in an eminent degree, that entire confidence might be reposed in them. Without these, and their being on good terms with the commanding general, his measures, if not designedly thwarted, may be so embarrassed as to make them move heavily on.

If the inspector-general is not an officer of great respectability of character, firm and strict in discharging the duties of the trust reposed in him, or if he is too pliant in his disposition, he will most assuredly be imposed upon, and the efficient strength of the army will not be known to the commander-in-chief. Of course he may form his plans upon erroneous calculations, and commit fatal mistakes.

If the quartermaster-general is not a man of great resource and activity, and worthy of the highest confidence, he would be unfit for the military station he is to occupy; for, as it is not possible at all times to conceal from him real designs and movements under false appearances, the better and safer way is, to place full confidence in him under the seal of responsibility. Then, knowing the plan, he participates in the concealment; on which, and the celerity of a movement, success oftentimes entirely depends. In addition to these requisites in a quartermaster-general, economy in providing for the wants of an army, proper arrangements in the distribution of their supplies, and a careful eye to the use of them, are of great importance, and call for a circumspect choice.

The adjutant-general ought also to be a man of established character, of great activity and experience in the details of an army, and of proved integrity; or no alertness can be expected in the execution of the several duties consigned to him on the one hand, and every thing is to be feared from treachery or neglect in his office on the other; by which the enemy might be as well informed of our strength as their own.

Though last mentioned, it is not the least important, that so essential and scientific a part of the army, as the corps of artillerists and engineers, should have an able and respectable officer at their head, without which it would soon sink into ignorance and disrepute.

Humanity and feeling for the sick and wounded of an army call loudly for skill, attention, and economy in the director of the hospitals; and, without the last qualification, profusion and misapplication of its stores will inevitably take place.

Able, well-informed, active, and spirited general of-

ficers are no doubt of high importance to the honor, reputation, and success of any army; but I have confined my observations in a more particular manner to those of the general staff, who may be considered as so many parts of the commander-in-chief. Viewing them, then, in this light, it will readily be seen how essential it is, that they should be agreeable to him. Such characters are within my view, if they would accept.

I have run into great prolixity, in order to give you a comprehensive view of my ideas on the subject of your letter, and the principles by which I am governed. Without these explanations, the answer might have been conveyed in a few words as follows.

When I retired to the walks of private life, I had no idea, that any event would occur which could induce me to leave them. The pain I should feel, if it be my fate to do so, cannot easily be expressed; yet, if this country should actually be invaded, or there should be such manifestation of a design to do it as cannot be mistaken, I should be ready to render every service in my power to repel it; —

Provided my declining years are not considered as an objection to the trust, but, on the contrary, and in support of the partiality which may actuate the President in my favor, it shall appear unequivocally to you, and to those with whom you act, being at the centre of information from all parts of the Union, and where a commander for the troops to be raised must often have been the subject of conversation, that the public wish was directed to me, notwithstanding my avowed declaration when I retired from office to remain a private citizen; —

And provided also, that I can have such characters associated with me, as will render the turmoils of war,

and the burthen of the command, as light as the nature of them will admit. For it is well known, that the vicissitudes of war are not within the reach of human control; and the chances of adding to, are not greater than the hazard of taking from, that reputation which the partiality of the world has been pleased to confer on me for past services. Not prompted, as I have observed in a former part of this letter, by motives of ambition or interest to embark again on a theatre so arduous and responsible, I might in the course of events be left with the single consolation of *knowing myself*, though possibly deprived even of the credit of that by the malevolence of others; and that a sense of duty was the *only* motive, which had induced me to run the risk, and to make the sacrifice of my ease and quiet at the same time.

In a very handsome, polite, and flattering letter, with which I have lately been honored by the President, he has *hinted* in very delicate terms, not to be misunderstood, a wish that the command of the military force of this country might be in me. I did not conceive myself at liberty, however, to go into such details and explanations with him, as, from the habits of intimacy I have always been in with you, I thought myself authorized to communicate to you, who may be assured of the sincere esteem and affectionate regards of, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 5 July, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

I am perfectly satisfied, that the duties of your office were not diminished by the business thrown upon it in

the course of the present session of Congress, and far was it from my wish to add to the trouble of them. I expected no more than a simple acknowledgment of my letters, and, with respect to the proposed arsenal at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah, that you would have said that it had or had not been forgotten, according to the fact.

I am well satisfied with your reply to my last; better perhaps than you will be with the trouble of reading the long scrawl herewith enclosed, to which it has given rise, and which if you please, as from yourself, may be shown to the President; to whom I have expressed tantamount sentiments in more concise terms. If you are at liberty, and deem it expedient, communicate to me the responses, which shall be made to it.

The President's letter to me, though not so expressed in terms, is nevertheless strongly indicative of a wish, that I should take charge of the military force of this country; and, if I take his meaning right, to aid also in the selection of the general officers. The appointment of these is important, but of those of the general staff all-important; insomuch that, if I am looked to as the commander-in-chief, I must be allowed to choose such as will be agreeable to me. To say more at present would be unnecessary; first, because an army may not be wanted; and, secondly, because I might not be indulged in this choice if it was.

You will readily perceive, that a main difficulty with me in this business proceeds from the different epochs at which the army may be formed, and at which it would be proper for me to take the command of it, in case the preliminaries mentioned in my other letter are solved to my satisfaction. The President, knowing that ten thousand men cannot be raised by the blowing

of a trumpet, might deem it expedient, from such appearances or information as would justify him under the act, to prepare for the worst. I, on the other hand, have no disposition, and think it would be bad policy, to come forward before the emergency *becomes evident*; farther than that it might be known, that I will step forward when it does appear so unequivocally; and if the matters, for which I have stipulated as previously necessary, are ascertained and accommodated, I shall have no objection to the annunciation (if good would result from it) of this determination. But what is to be done in the interval? I see but two ways to overcome the difficulty, if it is an object to accommodate my wishes; first, to delay the appointment of the general staff to the latter epoch, if no inconvenience would result from it; or, if this cannot be, then to advise with me on the appointment of them. I mention this matter now, and in this manner, because I have some reason to believe, that there are very fit men that would be coadjutors with me, whose services could not otherwise be commanded.

Although I have made my stand at the general staff, I conceive that much will depend upon active and spirited officers for the divisions and brigades of the army. And (under the rose) I shall candidly declare, that I do not, from my present recollection of them, conceive that a desirable set could be formed from the old generals, some having never displayed any talents for enterprise, and others having shown a general opposition to the government, or predilection to French measures, be their present conduct what it may. Those, who will come up with a flowing tide, will descend with the ebb, and there can be no dependence placed upon them in moments of difficulty. If circumstances would allow a choice of field-officers, the service would be much benefited by it.

With my two letters I must have tired you sufficiently, and therefore I shall only add, what you knew before, that I am your affectionate, &c.

P. S. I have already been applied to by a gentleman to recommend him for director of the hospital, which I have refused, as well on general ground, as because, if I should ever have occasion for a physician or surgeon, I should prefer my old surgeon, Dr. Craik,* who, from forty years' experience, is better qualified than a dozen of them together.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 11 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

As I never get letters by the mail until the morning after they arrive in Alexandria, and frequently not for several days, as I am not regular in sending thither, your favor of the 6th instant did not reach my hands until yesterday.†

Of the abilities and fitness of the gentleman you have named for a high command in the *provisional army*, I think as you do, and that his services ought to be secured at almost any price. What the difficulties are, that present themselves to the mind of the President in opposition to this measure, I am entirely ignorant; but in confidence, and with the frankness with which you have disclosed your own sentiments

---

* It will be recollected, that Dr. Craik was surgeon under Washington's command in the last French war, and during the revolution. He was present at Braddock's defeat in the memorable battle of the Monongahela.

† See Mr. Pickering's letter in the APPENDIX, No. XI.

on this occasion, I will unfold mine, under the view I have taken of the prospect before us, and shall do it concisely.

If the French should be so mad as openly and formidably to invade these United States, in expectation of subjugating the government, laying them under contribution, or in hopes of dissolving the Union, I conceive there can hardly be two opinions respecting their plan, and that their operations will commence in the southern quarter. First, because it is the weakest. Secondly, because they will expect, from the tenor of debates in Congress, to find more friends there. Thirdly, because there can be no doubt of their arming our own negroes against us. And fourthly, because they will be more contiguous to their Islands and to Louisiana, if they should be possessed thereof, which they will be if they can.

If these premises are just, the inference I am going to draw, from placing Colonel Hamilton over General Pinckney, is natural and obvious. The latter is an officer of high military reputation, fond of the profession, spirited, active, and judicious, and much advanced in the estimation of the public by his late conduct as minister and envoy at Paris.* With these pretensions, and being senior to Colonel Hamilton, he would not, I am morally certain, accept a junior appointment. Disgust would follow, and its influence would spread where most to be deprecated, as his connexions are numerous, powerful, and more influential than any others in the three southern States. Under this view of the subject, I think it would be impolitic, and might be dangerous, to sow the seeds of discontent at so important a crisis. To this may be added, that impedi-

* He had not yet returned from his mission to France.

ments to the return of General Pinckney, and causes unforeseen, might place Colonel Hamilton in the place you wish to see him in. Inspector-general, with a command in the line, would, I hope and trust, satisfy him. You will readily perceive, that the difficulty in my mind arises from thorough conviction, that, if an invasion is attempted, it will commence south of Maryland, and from the importance of so influential a character as Pinckney (if among us) being heartily engaged in repelling it. But, not having the laws at hand to refer to, or knowing precisely what general officers are authorized by them, I am speaking much at random, and request for that reason that nothing which I have here said may be considered as definitive.

What arrangements the Secretary of War is empowered by the President to make with me, I know not. In the letter of the former to me, he has not touched upon them. He is not yet arrived; but the bearer of this to the post-office in Alexandria takes up my carriage in order to accommodate him down, this being the afternoon on which the mail-stage is expected at that place. I regret, however, that he should have left Philadelphia before a letter, which I had written to him, could have reached that place.

This letter went from here on Friday last, before I knew, or had the most distant suspicion of the President's intention of nominating me, without previous notice, to the trust he has. It was written in consequence of a wish, expressed in a letter from the Secretary to me, that the crisis might overcome my reluctance to appear again on the public theatre.

Upon this occasion, I thought it expedient, before matters proceeded further, to be candid and explicit, and accordingly wrote to him my sentiments in detail, the substance of which was, that, if an *actual invasion*

by a formidable force should occur, or such demonstrations of the intention as could not be mistaken, I conceived it to be a duty, which I owed to my country and to my own reputation, to step forward with my best endeavours to repel it, however painful the measure might be to a person at my time of life, and under my circumstances; that, for the satisfaction of my own mind, I should like to know, from the best evidence the case was susceptible of, that my services as commander-in-chief would be preferred to those of a man more in the prime and vigor of life; and that, as neither ambition, interest, nor personal gratification of any sort, could induce me to engage again in the turmoils and hazards of war, as I had every thing to risk and hardly any thing to gain (the vicissitudes of war being in the hands of the Supreme Director, where is no control), and, as the army was about to be formed, and every thing in a manner depending upon its arrangement and organization, it could not be expected that I would take the command of it without previously knowing who my coadjutors were to be, and having the assistance of those in whom I could place confidence. I mentioned no names, for at that time I knew nothing of my own appointment, and thought the matter too much in embryo to go further, than to allow him, if a fit occasion occurred, to let these, as my sentiments, be known to the President. I shall conclude with great esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mount Vernon, 13 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

I had the honor, on the evening of the 11th instant, to receive from the hands of the Secretary of War your favor of the 7th, announcing that you had, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed me lieutenant-general and commander-in-chief of all the armies raised or to be raised for the service of the United States.*

I cannot express how greatly affected I am at this new proof of public confidence, and the highly flattering manner in which you have been pleased to make the communication; at the same time I must not conceal from you my earnest wish, that the choice had fallen on a man less declined in years, and better qualified to encounter the usual vicissitudes of war.

You know, Sir, what calculations I had made relative to the probable course of events on my retiring from office, and the determination I had consoled myself with, of closing the remnant of my days in my present peaceful abode. You will, therefore, be at no loss to conceive and appreciate the sensations I must have experienced, to bring my mind to any conclusion that would pledge me, at so late a period of life, to leave scenes I sincerely love, to enter upon the boundless field of public action, incessant trouble, and high responsibility.

It was not possible for me to remain ignorant of, or indifferent to, recent transactions. The conduct of the Directory of France towards our country, their insidious hostilities to its government, their various

* See the President's letter in the APPENDIX, No. XI.

practices to withdraw the affections of the people from it, the evident tendency of their arts and those of their agents to countenance and invigorate opposition, their disregard of solemn treaties and the laws of nations, their war upon our defenceless commerce, their treatment of our minister of peace, and their demands amounting to tribute, could not fail to excite in me corresponding sentiments with those, which my countrymen have so generally expressed in their affectionate addresses to you. Believe me, Sir, no one can more cordially approve of the wise and prudent measures of your administration. They ought to inspire universal confidence, and will no doubt, combined with the state of things, call from Congress such laws and means, as will enable you to meet the full force and extent of the crisis.

Satisfied, therefore, that you have sincerely wished and endeavoured to avert war, and exhausted to the last drop the cup of reconciliation, we can with pure hearts appeal to Heaven for the justice of our cause, and may confidently trust the final result to that kind Providence, which has heretofore and so often signally favored the people of these United States.

Thinking in this manner, and feeling how incumbent it is upon every person of every description to contribute at all times to his country's welfare, and especially in a moment like the present, when every thing we hold dear is so seriously threatened, I have finally determined to accept the commission of commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States; with the reserve only, that I shall not be called into the field until the army is in a situation to require my presence, or it becomes indispensable by the urgency of circumstances.

In making this reservation I beg to be understood,

that I do not mean to withhold any assistance to arrange and organize the army, which you may think I can afford. I take the liberty also to mention, that I must decline having my acceptance considered as drawing after it any immediate charge upon the public, and that I cannot receive any emoluments annexed to the appointment, before entering into a situation to incur expense.

The Secretary of War being anxious to return to the seat of government, I have detained him no longer than was necessary to a full communication upon the several points he had in charge. With very great respect and consideration, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Private and Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 14 July, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 8th instant,* was presented to me by the Secretary of War on the 11th. I have consented to embark once more on the boundless ocean of responsibility and trouble, with two reservations, namely, that the principal officers in the line and of the staff shall be such as I can place confidence in; and that I shall not be called into the field, until the army is in a situation to require my presence, or it becomes indispensable by the urgency of circumstances; contributing, in the mean while, every thing in my power to its efficient organization, but nothing to the public expense until I am in a situation to incur expense myself.

---

* See APPENDIX, No. XI.

It will be needless, after giving you this information, and having indelibly engraved on my mind the assurance contained in your letter of the 2d of June, to add that I rely upon you as a coadjutor and assistant in the turmoils I have consented to encounter.

I have communicated very fully with the Secretary of War on the several matters contained in the powers vested in him by the President, who, as far as it appears by them, is well disposed to accommodate. But I must confess, that, besides nominating me to the command of the armies without any previous consultation or notice, the whole of the business seems to me to stand upon such ground as may render the Secretary's journey and our consultation of no avail.

Congress, it is said, will rise this week. What then has been done, or can the President do, with respect to appointments under that bill, if it has been enacted? Be his inclinations what they may, unless a law could pass and has passed, enabling him in the recess of the Senate to make appointments conformably thereto, the appointments made, and the business done here with the Secretary, must have been rendered nugatory.

By the pending bill, if it passes to a law, two major-generals and an inspector-general with the rank of major-general, and the brigadiers are to be appointed. Presuming on its passing, I have given the following as my sentiments respecting the characters fit and proper to be employed, in which the Secretary concurs.

Alexander Hamilton, of New York, Inspector.

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina;
Henry Knox, of Massachusetts; or, if either of the last mentioned refuses,
Henry Lee, of Virginia;
} Major-Generals.

Henry Lee (if not Major-General);
John Brooks, of Massachusetts;
William S. Smith, of New York, or
John E. Howard, of Maryland; } Brigadiers.

Edward Hand, of Pennsylvania; or
Jonathan Dayton, Jr., of New Jersey; or
William S. Smith (if not Brigadier); } Adjutant-General.

Edward Carrington, Quartermaster-General.
James Craik, Director of Hospitals.

And I have enumerated the most prominent characters, that have occurred to my mind, from whom to select field-officers for the regiments of infantry and that of cavalry, which are proposed to be raised.

And now, my dear Sir, with that candor, which you always have and I trust ever will experience from me, I shall express to you a difficulty, which has arisen in my mind relative to seniority between you and General Pinckney; for, with respect to my friend, General Knox, whom I love and esteem, I have ranked him below you both. That you may know from whence this difficulty proceeds, it is proper I should observe, and I give it as my decided opinion, that, if the French should be so mad as to invade this country in expectation of making a serious impression, their operations will commence in the States south of Maryland.*

If these premises are just, the inference is obvious, that the services and influence of General Pinckney in the southern States would be of the highest and most interesting importance. Will he serve, then, under one whom he considers a junior officer? And what would be the consequence, if he should refuse, and his numerous and respectable connexions and acquaintances in those parts get disgusted? You have

* A paragraph containing the reasons is omitted, being precisely the same as in the letter to Mr. Pickering, dated July 11th.

no doubt heard, that his military reputation stands high in the southern States; that he is viewed as a brave, intelligent, and enterprising officer; and, if report be true, that no officer in the late American army made tactics and the art of war so much his study. To this account of him may be added, that his character has received much celebrity by his conduct as minister and envoy at Paris.

Under this view of the subject, my wish to put you first, and my fear of losing him, are not a little embarrassing. But why? For after all, it rests with the President to use his pleasure. I shall only add, therefore, that, as the welfare of the country is the object I persuade myself you will have in view, I shall sanguinely hope, that smaller matters will yield to measures, which have a tendency to promote it. I wish devoutly, that either of you, or any other fit character had been nominated in my place; for no one can make a greater sacrifice, at least of inclination, than will your ever affectionate, &c.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Mount Vernon, 16 July, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Little did I imagine, when I retired from the theatre of public life, that it was probable or even possible, that any event would arise in my day, that could induce me to entertain for a moment an idea of relinquishing the tranquil walks and refreshing shades, with which I am surrounded. But it is in vain, I perceive, to look for ease and happiness in a world of trouble.

The call of my country, and the urgency of my

friends to comply with it, have produced a letter from me to the President of the United States, which probably will be given to the public; but, if it should not, the principal feature therein is, that, with the reservation of not being called into the field until the army is in a situation to require my presence, or it becomes indispensable by the urgency of circumstances, I will accept the commission with which the Secretary of War came charged; desiring, however, that it might be understood, that my coadjutors in the first grades and principal staff of the army must be men in whom I could place entire confidence; for that it was not to be expected, at my time of life, that I would forsake the ease and comforts, which are essential in old age, encounter the toils and vicissitudes of war with all its concomitants, and jeopard the reputation which the partiality of the world has been pleased to bestow on me, when the hazard of diminishing is at least equal to the prospect of increasing it, without securing such assistance as would enable me to go with confidence into such a field of responsibility.

After this exordium, it is almost unnecessary to add, that I have placed you among those characters on whom I wish to lean for support. But, my dear Sir, as you always have found, and I trust ever will find, candor a prominent part of my character, I must add, that causes, which would exceed the limits of an ordinary letter to explain, are in the way of such an arrangement as might render your situation perfectly agreeable; but I fondly hope, that the difficulty will not be insurmountable in your decision.

For the present and the augmented force three major-generals and four brigadiers are allowed by the act establishing the latter; and, in a consultation with the Secretary of War, the characters proposed for the

major-generals are Colonel Hamilton, General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and yourself. The first of these in the public estimation, as declared to me, is designated to be second in command; with some fears, I confess, of the consequences, although I must acknowledge, at the same time, that I know not where a more competent choice could be made. General Pinckney's character as an active, spirited, and intelligent officer, you are acquainted with, and know that it stands very high in the southern States, it being understood there, that he made tactics as much if not more his study than any officer in the American army during the late war. His character in other respects in that quarter, before his late embassy, was also high, and throughout the Union it has acquired celebrity by his conduct as minister and envoy. His connexions are numerous, and their influence extensive. When to these considerations I add, as my decided opinion, for reasons unnecessary to enumerate, that, if the French intend an invasion of this country in force, their operations will commence south of Maryland, and probably of Virginia, you will see at once the importance of embarking this gentleman and all his connexions heartily in the active scenes that would follow, instead of damping their ardor, and thereby giving more activity to the leaven that is working in others, where unanimity of sentiment would be most desirable.

Viewing things in this light, I would fain hope, as we are forming an army anew, which army, if needful at all, is to fight for every thing which ought to be dear and sacred to freemen, that former rank will be forgotten, and, among the fit and chosen characters, the only contention will be, who shall be foremost in zeal at this crisis to serve his country, in whatever situation circumstances may place him. Most of those,

who are best qualified to oppose the enemy, will have sacrifices of ease, interest, or inclination to make. But what are these, when put in competition with the loss of our independence, or the subjugation of our government? Both of which are evidently struck at, by an intoxicated, ambitious, and domineering foe.

The arrangement made with the Secretary of War is on a separate sheet of paper, and meant for your perusal alone, until the decision of the President relative to it is announced.

With that esteem and regard, which you know I feel for you, I remain your sincere friend and affectionate servant.

P. S. From the best recollection I have of them, the Secretary of War is furnished with a list of field and other officers of the late army, of most celebrity, from whence to draw the field-officers for the corps to be raised. If you would afford your aid also, it would be obliging.*

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 22 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 18th was brought by the post of yesterday. The nominations, according to your list, will be agreeable to me, although I retain the opinion that Colonel Smith is better calculated for a command in the line than for adjutant-general. But what have you done respecting the quartermaster-general? I hope and trust it is not intended to overlook the character I recommended in *pointed terms*, than whom, I will

* See General Knox's answer in the APPENDIX, No. XII.

confidently add, one more adequate is not to be found in the United States, let the operations of the army be in what quarter it will, nor so fit, if they be in the States south of Maryland, as he knows and is known by every one in those regions, having been the deputy quartermaster under General Greene in all his active movements; and he is as much esteemed, as he is extensively known. In a word, if this appointment does not take place, after my explanations, which I was careful to have well understood respecting this officer, and after it was given *specially* in charge to you to consult me thereon, I shall feel very much hurt on the *general ground* I took. And the more so, as, confiding with certainty that that officer, for the reasons I assigned, would be made agreeable to me, I wrote to Colonel Carrington, and received the answer herewith enclosed, which may be returned after the proper use is made of it.*

I desire it may be understood, that my predilection for this gentleman proceeds from no other cause, than a full conviction of his fitness to fill the office to which he was assigned; for, having been separated from the main army, he is infinitely better known to me by character than from personal acquaintance (which in fact is slight), and by the steady and firm support he has given to the government ever since. Such a character, his military knowledge, intelligence, and experience in the duties of quartermaster would render an acquisition to any army; and the only fear

* On this point the Secretary of War replied; "I enclose the act for augmenting the army of the United States. You will see, that it does not provide for a quartermaster-general; and that the provisional army law provides that the quartermaster-general under it shall have the rank and pay of lieutenant-colonel only. I thought it best, therefore, that no quartermaster-general should be appointed till Congress meet again, when they may amend the act." — *August 1st.*

I had was, that he would decline accepting it. The present quartermaster may be adequate to the civil duties of that office; and, while the present troops are doing garrison duty in the western country, little more is necessary; but bring him to an assembled and moving army in the field, where encampments and a thousand military duties would be thrown upon him, and he would be found altogether incompetent, from an entire unacquaintedness with the scenes.

By what circuitous route did you come at S—— in the wilderness? He may be an estimable character for ought I know; but, from the impression I have of him, he is better qualified to cut off Indians, than to discipline an army and lead a brigade to the mouth of cannon. But, as I may have mistaken his character, I will halt with my strictures on it.

Also enclosed you will receive a letter from Mr. John Tayloe to me, whom you must know by character, being the brother of Mrs. Lloyd, and son-in-law of Mr. Ogle of Annapolis. He is among the most wealthy and respectable men in this State, active, zealous, and attentive to whatever he undertakes. On the western expedition against the insurgents, he commanded a troop of horse, and I believe, but am not sure, was aid to the commander-in-chief. What he looks to now, beyond the expression of his letter, I know not. With respect to the more definite part of it, I give one answer to all, and that is and will continue to be, unless some very particular case should come forward, that, until I take the field, or am in some situation to require aids, I shall hold myself perfectly disengaged and free; as, in the choice of my established ones, there are many considerations to be combined, besides the mere indulgence of my wishes. In addition to this, I have informed Mr. Tayloe, that I would

transmit his letter to you, to be laid before the President, not doubting it would give him, as it had done me, pleasure to find gentlemen in his situation, and of independent fortune, stepping forward at such a crisis with a tender of their services.

I presume he would prefer an appointment in the cavalry, and I have no doubt that he could raise a very fine troop; but whether he would be satisfied with that, or whether more could be offered with due attention to the old cavalry officers of known and acknowledged merit, I am not prepared to decide. Possibly such an appointment, with the privilege of choosing his own lieutenant and cornet, might induce his acceptance. And here I will take the liberty of giving it as my opinion once for all, that, when the President has fixed upon officers of established character to command companies, gentlemen who prize their own honor and the reputation of their companies, it would be good policy to let them choose or at least to recommend their own subalterns. It would facilitate recruiting, contribute much to the harmony of the company, and, if the captain himself is properly chosen, it may be relied on, that he will be cautious not to hazard his own and the reputation of his company with bad officers, if known or even suspected to be unfit for his purpose.

I do not recollect enough of the present officers in the cavalry, or of those who have been disbanded, to say with decision which of them is best entitled to the command of that corps; but I have no hesitation in declaring it as my opinion, that Major Tallmadge (formerly of Sheldon's horse) would not disgrace it, and is to be preferred to his former colonel.

In furnishing the list I gave you when here, from whom field-officers might be selected for the corps to

be raised, I omitted, not seeing his name enrolled, Major Ragsdale of the artillery. His character in that corps, I am told stood high. How it has happened, that he is yet in the back-ground, whether from choice or because he has been overlooked, I am unable to say. He is of this State, as Tallmadge is of New York.

A Lieutenant Marsteller, at present one of the troop of horse in Alexandria, has been recommended to me as a man wishing and deserving an appointment in the army about to be raised. A Dr. Peyton, son of a very worthy man, and brother to two of the best officers in Lee's company of horse during the revolutionary war, has also applied for a berth in the medical line. I have answered, that appointments are not with me, and that recommendations accompanying my letters to them should go to the President direct, or through the Secretary of War. Possibly you may see these. They must speak for themselves.

The first is well spoken of as an officer and gentleman. He was in the horse in the western expedition, and by accident received a wound. Dr. Peyton is but lately returned after an absence of five years in Europe, I believe in the study of physic. I have also been told, that Captain Young of the Alexandria troop is desirous of employment; but, as his application has not been direct, I but barely mention the fact. Dr. Craik did say something, too, respecting his son (who was in my family) going into the army; but, as nothing definite passed, I shall say nothing more on the subject. His son-in-law, West, major in one of the uniform corps, is desirous, in case the provisional army is raised, of obtaining an appointment therein. I shall add no more at present, than that I am, &c.

TO JAMES ANDERSON.

Mount Vernon, 25 July, 1798.

ESTEEMED SIR,

Your favor of the 8th of February came safe, and would have received an earlier acknowledgment, if any thing had sooner occurred worthy of communication.

I hope you have not only got relieved of the fever from which you were then recovering, but of the languor with which it had affected you, and that you are now engaged in the literary pursuits, of which you gave the outlines, and which, with your pen and under your arrangement of the subjects, must be curious, entertaining, and instructive. Thus persuaded, if you propose to conduct the work on the plan of subscription, it would give me pleasure to be enrolled in the list of subscribers.*

I little imagined, when I took my last leave of the walks of public life, that any event could bring me again on a public theatre. But the unjust conduct of France towards these United States has been and continues to be such, that it must be opposed by a

* *From Dr. Anderson's Letter.* — "I have been urged to engage once more in a literary enterprise; and it begins to wear such a seducing aspect, that I am not certain but I may be drawn into it. Agriculture is proposed to be one principal department of the work; natural history, another; by which I mean a general view of the phenomena of nature, the causes of these as far as they are known, and their influence in this universe. This is a noble and inexhaustible theme to engage a man advancing in years, who wishes to free himself as much as he can from those little objects, which form the perplexities of life. The remaining part of the work will be appropriated to miscellaneous disquisitions on arts and literature. It will be a monthly periodical. I am particularly fond of that mode of publication, because truth can thus be gradually impressed on the mind by little and little." — *London, February 8th.*

This was probably the work entitled *Recreations in Agriculture*, begun by Dr. Anderson in April, 1799, and continued through six volumes.

firm and manly resistance, or we shall not only hazard the subjugation of our government, but the independence of our nation also; both being evidently struck at by a lawless, domineering power, which respects no rights, and is restrained by no treaties, when it is found inconvenient to observe them.

While we are thus situated, sustaining daily injuries, even indignities, with a patient forbearance, from a sincere desire to live in peace and harmony with all the world; the French Directory, mistaking the American character, and supposing that the people of this country were divided, and would give countenance to their nefarious measures, have proceeded to exact loans (or in other words contributions), and to threaten us, in case of non-compliance with their wild, unfounded, and inconsistent complaints, that we should share the fate of Venice and other Italian states.

This has roused the people from their slumbers, and filled them with indignation from one extremity to the other of the Union; and I trust, if they should attempt to carry their threats into effect, and invade our territorial, as they have done our commercial rights, they will meet a spirit, that will give them more trouble than they are aware of, in the citizens of these States.

When every thing sacred and dear to freemen is thus threatened, I could not, consistently with the principles which have actuated me through life, remain an idle spectator, and refuse to obey the call of my country to lead its armies for *defence*, and therefore have pledged myself to come forward whensoever the exigency shall require it.

With what sensations, at my time of life, now turned of sixty-six, without ambition or interest to stimulate me thereto, I shall relinquish the peaceful walk to which I had retired, and in the shades of which I

had fondly hoped to spend the remnant of a life, worn down with cares, in contemplation of the past, and in scenes present and to come of rural enjoyment, let others, and especially those who are best acquainted with the construction of my mind, decide; while I, believing that man was not designed by the all-wise Creator to live for himself alone, prepare for the worst that can happen.

The gardener, whom you were so obliging as to send me, continues to conduct himself extremely well. He is industrious, sober, and orderly, and understands his business. In short, I never had a hired servant that pleased me better; and what adds to my satisfaction is, that he is himself contented, having declared that he never was happier in his life. My best wishes will always attend you, and, with very great esteem and regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 29 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 25th instant came to Alexandria yesterday evening, and was put into my hands this morning. For the rules and regulations accompanying it, I thank you, and will read them attentively, if I am allowed time; but this is questionable, as I am assailed from all quarters, and by all descriptions of people, for commissions, introductions, and recommendations; to all of which common civility makes some sort of reply necessary, while among them there are a few, to whom more particular answers must be given.

This leads me to ask whether a secretary, previous to the contingencies on which my taking the field is

placed, will be allowed? The pay I mean. Without which the moments employed in my usual and necessary avocations, and which I have been at all leisure hours devoting to the arrangement of my voluminous public papers, civil and military, that they may go into secure deposits, and hereafter into hands, that may be able to separate the grain from the chaff; I say, without this aid, my time (and in truth I had from a variety of causes, which it is needless to enumerate, little enough before) will be entirely taken up by personal visits and written applications for office, and such other matters as are incidental to my late appointment.

The motives to this question are explained. The necessity I conceive is apparent; but, as I have placed my own services, pay, and emoluments upon contingencies, which may happen sooner or later, or never, you are to decide, and accordingly advise, whether or not a secretary can be appointed previously to this event, with the pay and forage allowance annexed to the office.*

You will not have transmitted to you the half, perhaps not a tenth part of the applications, which are made to me. It may be taken for granted, therefore, that all who appear to you under my auspices are such, as I am either personally acquainted with, whose families I know, or with whose recommendations I am satisfied.

---

* The Secretary of War replied; "The President desires me to inform you, that he considers you in the public service from the date of your appointment, and entitled to all the emoluments of it; that you are at liberty to receive all, or any part, at your discretion; that you are fully authorized to appoint your aids and secretaries when you shall think fit; that one secretary at least is indispensable immediately; and that he ought to be allowed his pay and rations. You will be pleased, therefore, to make any or all of these appointments, when you may judge proper." — *Trenton, August 25th.*

Your answers to Judge Caton and Judge Chase were judicious and proper. Of the propriety of remaining perfectly free from all engagements, respecting my aids, I am more and more convinced, as the applications increase, and the little knowledge displayed of the qualifications, which the aids of the commander-in-chief ought to possess, is discovered by the applicants. The various and important duties of the aids of a commander-in-chief, or the commander of a separate army, require experienced officers, men of judgment, and men of business, with ready pens to execute them properly and with despatch. A great deal more is required of them than attending him at a parade, or delivering verbal orders here and there, or copying a written one. They ought, if I may be allowed the expression, to possess the soul of the general; and, from a single idea given to them, to convey his meaning in the fullest and clearest manner. For this, young men, unacquainted with the service and diffident, would not do, be their abilities what they may. One or two of the latter, as extra, might be received, but the choice must depend on circumstances.

Why do you not say something about the quarter-master-general and adjutant-general? I am thrown entirely into the field of conjecture, to account for your silence on these interesting points; nor am I relieved in either by the gazettes. Will Colonel Hamilton accept? Have you heard from the other general officers? My paper is done, and I am always yours.

TO TOBIAS LEAR.

Mount Vernon, 2 August, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

I was glad to hear by Charles, that you were much better than when we saw you last. If you have missed the ague, care and bark are necessary to prevent a return, and this prudence requires.

Monday next being the day fixed on by the constitution of the Potomac Company for its annual meeting, and as you seem resolved to relinquish your present office of president, I wish you would turn your thoughts attentively to the situation of it, and resolve seriously on characters fit and proper to supply the place of those, who perhaps ought to, as well as those who will, quit the directorship, that our struggles in that interesting and expensive concern, the labor of years, may not end in disgrace and loss.

The little leisure I had before my late appointment (from visits, my necessary rides, and other occurrences) to overhaul, arrange, and separate papers of real from those of little or no value, is now by that event so much encroached upon by personal and written applications for offices, and other matters incidental to the commander-in-chief, that without assistance I must abandon all idea of accomplishing this necessary work, before I embark in new scenes, which will render them more voluminous and of course more difficult; a measure which would be extremely irksome to me to submit to, especially as it respects my accounts, which are yet in confusion; my earnest wish and desire being, when I quit the stage of human action, to leave all matters in such a situation as to give as little trouble as possible to those, who will have the management of them thereafter.

Under this view of my situation, which is far from being an agreeable one, and at times fills me with deep concern, when I perceive so little prospect of a complete extrication, I have written to the Secretary of War to be informed whether, as my taking the field is contingent, and no pay or emolument will accrue to myself until then, I am at liberty to appoint my secretary immediately, who shall be allowed his pay and forage from the moment he joins me. If he answers in the affirmative, can you do this on these terms?

Have you heard from the master of the academy at Charlestown? At any rate my opinion is, that you had better with the least possible delay get the boys fixed permanently at some good school. They will otherwise lose precious moments. Let me hear from you. I am, in haste, your affectionate, &c.*

TO HENRY KNOX.

Mount Vernon, 9 August, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 29th ultimo has filled my mind with disquietude and perplexity in the extreme; but I will say nothing in reply intentionally, that shall give you a moment's pain. Indeed, from the tenor of your letter, it would seem as if nothing I could say now would be of any avail, after the open, candid, and I think friendly communications in my letter of the 16th of July, assigning reasons for what had been done, which could not, I conceive, be construed into a supposed inferiority in you on my part. But, as there

* Mr. Lear accepted the appointment of secretary.

are some things in your letter, which appear to have originated in a misconception of circumstances, justice to myself makes it necessary to explain.

When I observe, then, that the first knowledge I had of my own appointment, nay, the first intimation that such a measure was in contemplation was contained in a newspaper, as a complete act of the President and Senate, accompanied with a few lines from the Secretary of War of the same date (July 4th), informing me that he should be the bearer of my commission, and the President's instructions to make some, but he does not say what arrangements; — when, with this information I was left, from the receipt thereof until the arrival of the Secretary on the night of the 11th, with sensations occasioned thereby easier to conceive than describe; — and when, upon his arrival I was presented with a pending bill for augmenting the army of the United States, and informed at the same time, that Congress would, as it actually did, adjourn the Monday following, what was to be done? My earnest desire, often repeated, was, that Congress could be prevailed on, circumstanced as things were, to vest a power in the President to make appointments in the recess of the Senate, rather than precipitate the organization of an army, that time might be allowed for a deliberate and harmonious consultation on the arrangement of the general officers at least; and I offered to attend in Philadelphia myself, and send for Colonel Hamilton and you to meet me there, for this very desirable purpose. I even hastened precipitately Mr. McHenry's return, in hopes he might be back in time to accomplish this object, guarding, however, against the failure.

Under this statement, which you will find correct, how was it possible for me, who have never in the

remotest degree directly or indirectly interfered in any matter of government since I left the chair of it, to have consulted you previously to the nomination of the general officers? And if giving in your name without, in the manner it was handed to the President, which seemed to be the result of necessity, from circumstances which have been communicated, is considered as a wound to your feelings, might I not complain upon ground equally strong and hurtful to mine? Brought as I was, without the least intimation, before the public after it had been officially announced to the world, that my soul panted for rest, and that the first wish of my heart was to spend the remnant of a life worn down with care in ease and contemplation, but left as I was by *this act* without an alternative, or with a very disagreeable one, I passed it over in silence, from a conviction, that, if affairs are in the alarming state they are represented to be, I was not to complain or stand upon punctilios.

So soon as my nomination as commander-in-chief was given in by the President, to which, according to Mr. McHenry's account, he was induced, without consulting me, by the urgency of his friends, I was inundated with letters, describing the crisis and the expediency of my accepting the command.

Through the same channel, and from information I had no cause to distrust, no doubt remained on my mind, that Colonel Hamilton was designated second in command (and first, if I should decline an acceptance,) by the federal characters of Congress; whence alone any thing like a public sentiment relative thereto could be deduced. On this authority the paragraph, which you quoted from my letter, was founded. I pretend to no other knowledge of the business.

The moment I had resolved to accept the command,

with the reservations mentioned in my letter to the President, now before the public, my first care was to look for coadjutors with whom I could be happy, and in whom I could place entire confidence. A second thought was not necessary as to the major-generals for the augmented army; but to arrange them, with an attention to the various views the subject presented, was not easy.

In a free and candid strain I frankly declared to you in my last the principle, and the only principle, which operated in the arrangement of General Pinckney; but, as I was more concise on this head as it related to Colonel Hamilton, I will ask your patience while I detail the reasons, which prevailed in his case.

First, having already informed you of the evidence, as given to me, of the public wish that he should be second in command, if I accepted, and first, if I did not, it is unnecessary to repeat it. Secondly, considering the military establishment of this country was about to take a new form, and to commence as it were *de novo*, without particular regard to an army which had been disbanded near fourteen years, I conceived that the President, in the choice of officers and arrangement of them, would pay as much attention to circumstances as to former rank. Not supposing, then, that the latter would be viewed in so serious a light, as appears by your letter, I shall readily acknowledge, that I had recourse to no old resolves of Congress, nor did I recollect any that would apply to the case. Thirdly, I might in some measure have been led into this belief, from what happened in consequence of the insurrection in 1794. Then, you will recollect, General Lee, who had never been more than a colonel in the army of the United States, was put over the heads

of Mifflin, Irvine, Morgan, and Bland, all of whom had been general officers in the said service; not because he was governor of Virginia, for the moment he crossed the Potomac, which he was obliged to do to get at the insurgents, his office and power as governor ceased. Fourthly, the same communication of the wishes, that Colonel Hamilton might be second in command, conveyed intimation also, that, from his situation and prospects, having a large family and no certain dependence but his profession, which was lucrative, something as nearly adequate, as the case would admit, ought to be offered to induce his acceptance, and the second rank was proposed. Fifthly, although his services during the war were not rendered in the grade of a general officer, yet his opportunities and experience could not be short of those of the officers that served in that rank. Sixthly, adding these to the important trusts reposed in him in various civil walks of life, he will be found, I trust, upon as high ground as most men in the United States.

I do not know that these explanations will afford you any satisfaction, or produce any change in your determination, but it was just to myself to make them. If there has been any management in the business, it has been concealed from me. I have had no agency therein, nor have I conceived a thought on the subject, that has not been disclosed to you with the utmost sincerity and frankness of heart. And now, notwithstanding the insinuations, which are implied in your letter, of the vicissitudes of friendship, and the inconstancy of mine, I will pronounce with decision, that it ever has been, and, notwithstanding the unkindness of the charge, ever will be, for aught I know to the contrary, warm and sincere.

I earnestly wished, on account of that friendship, as

well as on the score of military talents, to have had the assistance of you and Colonel Hamilton in the arduous scenes with which we are threatened. I wish it still devoutly, as well on public as private accounts; for dissensions of this sort will have an unhappy effect among the friends of government, while it will be sweet consolation to the French partisans, and food for their pride.*

I will now close my letter, spun to a greater length than I expected when I began, with a solemn declaration, that if such powers as I suggested in the early part of this letter had, as I think they ought, under the circumstances of the case, been given to the President, and the consequent meeting had taken place in Philadelphia, I should have been perfectly satisfied with any arrangement, that would have produced harmony and content; for nothing could be farther from my wish, than to see you in a degraded point of view. How the commissions are dated I know not. I am, as I ever have been, my dear Sir, your sincere friend and affectionate servant.†

---

* A paragraph is here omitted, which is so much defaced in the manuscript as not to be intelligible. It relates to what General Knox had said respecting the unequal distribution of the general officers in different parts of the country.

† See the answer, dated August 26th, in the APPENDIX, No. XII.

On the 9th of August General Washington likewise wrote to General Hamilton, enclosing a copy of his letter to General Knox, dated July 16th, and of General Knox's answer, dated July 29th. But this letter, having been preserved only in a press-copy, is so much obliterated by time, as to be nearly illegible. General Hamilton's answer, dated August 20th, is in the APPENDIX, No. XII.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 10 August, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will consider this letter as private and confidential, dictated by friendship, and flowing from the best intentions. If then any thing should be found therein, which may have too much the appearance of plain dealing, look to the motives and manner of the communication, and my apology will be sought for in your candor.

From the moment I accepted my appointment as commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, I considered myself as nearly allied to the Secretary of War, and entitled to particular attentions from him, notwithstanding I drew no pay, nor was acting in the field. It could not have been supposed, had it not otherwise been expressed, that I would be called to the army in the moment of danger as ignorant of its formation, its munitions, and every thing relating thereto, as if I had just dropped from the clouds.

My solicitude often and strongly expressed, relative to the formation of the army, could not but have impressed you with my ideas of its importance; but, if stronger evidence was necessary, the offer I made to go at this hot season, and in other respects inconvenient, to Philadelphia, would be conclusive. But what fruit has it produced? To this moment I am ignorant of every step, that has been taken in the appointment of the battalion officers, for recruiting the men, fixing the places of rendezvous, &c.

With respect to the quartermaster-general, finding no mention made of one in the list of appointments, nor any thing said of him in your letter of the 18th of July announcing them, I waited some time to see

if any explanation of this matter would be given; but, finding none, I wrote to you on the 22d of that month to be informed of the cause, and not until the first of this was I answered. And, with respect to the adjutant-general, I am at this moment unadvised of the result of Colonel Smith's nomination. I have heard, indeed, that Colonel North was appointed, and that it had been announced in the newspapers; but this I have not seen, although I have examined them with an eye to it, as accurately as my hurried state would admit.

Having staked my life, my reputation, my fortune, my ease, tranquillity, and happiness, in support of the government and independence of our country, it is not a little interesting and important for me to be advised of the measures, which are pursuing to organize and provide for the augmented force. As that act is absolute, no delay can be admitted; and it is much to be desired, that it may take the field with *éclat*, which will not be effected without great exertion. And, as it will not be supposed that the President, well-disposed, sensible, and zealous as he is, can have many relative ideas in arrangements of this sort, the more responsibility will attach to you; and, as the multiplicity of matters and burthens will be great, let me intreat you to call on the inspector, allowing him full pay and emoluments, for assistance. The business of recruiting, in the result, belongs to his department. Then why not let it commence and be prosecuted, agreeably to your general instructions, by him and under his auspices?

It is much easier at all times to prevent an evil than to rectify mistakes; it is infinitely better to have a few good men than many indifferent ones. Officers, whose recruiting emoluments depend on numbers, will not

be very scrupulous in their choice, without the fullest conviction that the inspection of the men will be as rigid as the instructions are strict. You would, besides, find him in your hurried situation extremely useful in a variety of occurrences, which cannot always be foreseen or provided against. I would have suggested a similar measure, with respect to General Knox, as it related more particularly to arms and the ordnance department, but (under the rose for the present) he seems to be so much dissatisfied with the arrangement of the relative rank of the general officers, that I have no expectation of his serving.

Let me conclude by requesting to be informed, in what state the formation of the augmented army is; whether the applications for commissions are numerous and the characters good; what arrangements are made for recruiting; where the general rendezvous are to be; who is appointed to superintend them; what is the present state of your military supplies; what the means and what the measures for augmenting them. With much truth and sincerity, I remain your affectionate, &c.*

* More delay and embarrassment than usual occurred at this time, in transmitting letters between General Washington and the members of the cabinet, on account of the removal of the public offices to Trenton, caused by the breaking out of the yellow fever in Philadelphia. The President was likewise on a visit to his seat in Massachusetts, and was detained there in consequence of sickness in his family. Congress had adjourned on the 16th of July. The Senate sat three days longer to consider nominations and complete the appointments.

TO BUSHROD WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 12 August, 1798.

MY DEAR BUSHROD,

I have received your letter of the 7th instant, giving an extract of Mr. Nicholas's letter to you. With respect to the request contained in it,* I leave the matter entirely to his own discretion, with your advice to advance or halt, according to the tenableness of his ground and circumstances.

If he could prove indubitably, that the letter addressed to me with the signature of *John Langhorne* was a forgery, no doubt would remain in the mind of any one, that it was written with a view to effect some nefarious purpose. And if the person he suspects is the *real* author or abettor, it would be a pity not to expose him to public execration for attempting, in so dishonorable a way, to obtain a disclosure of sentiments, of which some advantage could be taken. But Mr. Nicholas will unquestionably know, that if the proofs fail the matter will recoil, and that the statement must be a full and not a partial one, that is given to the public; not only as the most satisfactory mode of bringing it before that tribunal, but shortest in the result; for he will have a persevering phalanx to contend against.

It seems to me, that he would be obliged to disclose the manner in which his correspondence and mine began, and the motives which led to it; for, until the discovery was made and communicated by him to me, that *John Langhorne* was a fictitious name, I had not the smallest suspicion thereof, but on the contrary viewed the production as that of a pedagogue, who

* A request to publish a statement of the affair respecting the fictitious *John Langhorne*. See above, p. 219.

was desirous of exhibiting a few of his flowers. And, after returning a civil but short answer, I never thought more of him or his letter until the history of the business was developed by Mr. Nicholas. All this must appear. A contrivance would be retorted. I will only add, that, as Mr. Nicholas has made you a confidant in this business, I shall acquiesce with pleasure in any steps he may take in bringing me forward with your concurrence.

Your aunt and the family unite with me in best wishes for yourself and Mrs. Washington, and I am, my dear Sir, your sincere friend and affectionate uncle.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 13 August, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

It was not, as you will perceive by the letter sent herewith, until after I had written my private and confidential letter of the 10th to you, that I was favored with the details contained in your letter of the 8th. The receipt of which, and finding that my ideas accorded so well with the measures you had suggested for the consideration of the President, filled my mind with exquisite pleasure; and it would be uncandid not to confess, that your silence, and my entire ignorance of what was doing with respect to the organization of the army and recruiting the men, produced very disagreeable sensations. It must strike every one, that, to meet veteran troops accustomed to conquer, with raw men, quite untutored and void of discipline, would not be desirable.

I did not imagine that Major Tallmadge's expecta-

tions would have soared so high. To have commanded the cavalry I should have thought would be gratifying, and I believe he is better qualified for that than for adjutant-general; not but that he might do for the latter, although it so happened that he was but little with the army,* being employed chiefly on detached parties, and of course less acquainted with a roster. It is much to be wished, that Maryland could furnish a good character for adjutant-general. It is a respectable State, well affected, and gives not, that I see, an officer of any consequence to the army.

I heartily and sincerely wish you a perfect restoration to health, and, with very great esteem and regard, am always your affectionate, &c.

TO JONATHAN BOUCHER.†

Mount Vernon, 15 August, 1798.

REVEREND SIR,

I know not how it has happened, but the fact is, that your favor of the 8th of November last year is but just received, and at a time when both public and private business pressed so hard upon me, as to afford no leisure to peruse the "*View of the Causes and Consequences of the American Revolution*," written by you, and which you had been pleased to send me. For the honor of its dedication, and for the friendly and favorable sentiments which are therein expressed, I pray you to accept my acknowledgments and thanks.

---

* During the revolution. In many parts of the preceding volumes of this work, it may be seen with what efficiency Major Tallmadge executed the duties assigned to him as a confidential officer near the enemy's lines.

† For a notice of this gentleman see Vol. II. p. 361.

Not having read the book, it follows of course that I can express no opinion with respect to its political contents; but I can venture to assert beforehand and with confidence, that there is no man in either country more zealously devoted to peace and a good understanding between the two nations than I am, nor one who is more disposed to bury in oblivion all animosities, which have subsisted between them, and between the individuals of each.

Peace with all the world is my sincere wish. I am sure it is our true policy, and am persuaded it is the ardent desire of the government. But there is a nation, whose intermeddling and restless disposition, and attempts to divide, distract, and influence the measures of other countries, will not suffer us, I fear, to enjoy this blessing long, unless we will yield to them our rights, and submit to greater injuries and insults, than we have already sustained, to avoid the calamities resulting from war.

What will be the consequences of our arming for self-defence, that Providence which permits these doings in the disturbers of mankind, and which rules and governs all things, alone can tell. To its all-powerful decrees we must submit, whilst we hope, that the justice of our cause, if war must ensue, will entitle us to its protection. With very great esteem, I am, &c.

TO BUSHROD WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 27 August, 1798.

MY DEAR BUSHROD,

At the time your letter of the 20th instant was brought to this place, I was not in a situation to acknowledge the receipt of it.

I learnt with much pleasure, from the postscript to your letter, of General Marshall's intention to make me a visit.* I wish it of all things; and it is from the ardent desire I have to see him, that I have not delayed a moment to express it, lest, if he should have intended it on his way to Frederic, and hear of my indisposition, he might change his route.

I can add with sincerity and truth, that, if you can make it comport with your business, I should be exceedingly happy to see you along with him. The crisis is important. The temper of the people in this State, at least in some places, is so violent and outrageous, that I wish to converse with General Marshall and yourself on the elections, which must soon come.

The fictitious letter of *John Langhorne* may be had at any time. I do not send it now, because if you come up it will do then, and we will let General Marshall into the whole business, and advise with him thereon. Good or evil must flow from Mr. Nicholas's attempt, according to his establishment of facts. Present my best wishes to General Marshall, and believe me to be always your affectionate uncle.

TO JAMES MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 3 September, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

My last to you was dated the 20th of August; two days previous to which I had been seized with a fever, which I endeavoured to shake off by pursuing my usual rides and occupations; but it continued to

* He had recently returned from his unsuccessful mission to France.

increase upon me; when on the 21st at night Dr. Craik was called in, who it seems chose to have assistance, and on the 24th procured such a remission as to admit bark. Since which I have been in a convalescent state, but too much debilitated to be permitted to attend much to business. And I mention it with no other view, than to apprize you of my inability to enter so actively upon the duties you have suggested, as you probably have counted upon. I shall, however, do all that the situation of my health and circumstances will enable me to do to answer your expectations, if I should be finally charged in the manner you have suggested to the President.

You must permit me however to add, that the wide expanse, which forms the southern district, will render it very difficult to obtain correct information of characters, will require more time than is supposed, and will, after all, be liable to much imposition, as confidence must be placed in others, who may be actuated more by local considerations than the general weal.

It is much to be wished, that General Pinckney had arrived,* and if the arrival should be north of this, that he might call here with your ideas, that I might with him arrange matters finally relative to the States of South Carolina and Georgia, and provisionally as they respect North Carolina and Tennessee. Kentucky from its local situation is not only remote from, but in a manner unconnected with, any other State; and, as you have taken no notice of the northwestern territory, the presumption is that you contemplated neither officers nor men from that region.

Upon the principle, that the three great districts of the United States give each four of the augmented

* From France. He did not return at the same time as Mr. Marshall.

regiments, I suppose it is meant that the several States composing these districts should furnish a quota proportioned to its population; and on this principle, without regarding fractions, I shall proceed, when ultimately instructed, unless you direct otherwise. But, for the want of a general list of the revolutionary officers, to remind one of the captains and subalterns, who have distinguished themselves in the late war, many of the most deserving and meritorious may be overlooked. I have heard already of several coming under this description, who have declared their willingness to serve, but not to be called upon suddenly; adding that, as their names are registered in the war office, they may be called for if it is considered that their services are needful and to be preferred. Upon this ground, if you suppose it probable that the selection of regimental officers for the southern district will be intrusted to me to bring forward, I should be glad to be furnished with a general list of them. The one you left with me, you will recollect, comprises the field-officers only, and of those only such as continued to the end of the war.

You have said in your letter of the 25th ultimo, that "the officers for the cavalry are to be selected by the lieutenant-general of the army," but do not say whether they are to be taken from the southern district wholly, or from the Union at large. On this head I shall require explicit directions.

I have no doubt, that a body of fine cavalry might be raised in the southern district, if the price of the horses is not too limited, and that they would stand the southern operations better than northern horses; and I believe a handsome corps of officers might also be had; but it remains with you to direct where both or either are to be taken from. Tallmadge, according

to your account in a former letter, although I could perceive no reason for it, unless the promotion of General Dayton has raised his expectations, looks higher than the command of such a corps.

When I am furnished by the superintendent with a return of the military stores now on hand and in train to be procured, I shall, agreeably to your desire, offer such observations thereon as may occur. In the mean time, I have no hesitation in declaring, that your magazines cannot be too well furnished with all necessary articles of *foreign dependence*; the procuring of which, if the country should be invaded, will not only be rendered precarious, but they must come much higher. Those of our own growth or manufacture we have more at command. And above all things direct the keepers of your powder magazines to be attentive to the powder, turning it often, and proving it frequently; otherwise there may appear to be a store, while there is none in fact, that is, none fit for use.

I have not been in a situation to examine the printed rules and regulations respecting the recruiting service, transmitted in your last. I hope they are rigid, and pointed to good men; for it is much better to have a few good soldiers than a multitude of vagrants and indifferent ones, who, besides other imperfections, may desert their colors in critical moments.

If any change should take place in settling the relative rank of the major-generals, I shall hope and expect to be informed of it. With much truth, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* It had been intimated to Washington, that the President did not agree with him in opinion as to the relative rank to be assigned to the major-generals, but that he considered General Knox's former standing in the army as making his claims superior to those of either of the others. He was doubtless acquainted, also, with General Knox's own

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 9 September, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 1st instant * came duly to hand, and I beg you to be persuaded, that no apology will be necessary for any confidential communications you may be disposed to intrust me with.

In every public transaction of my life my aim has been to do that which appeared to me to be most conducive to the public weal. Keeping this object always in view, no local considerations, or private gratifications incompatible therewith, can ever render information displeasing to me from those, in whom I have confidence, and who I know have the best opportunities of acquiring a knowledge of facts in matters, which may be interesting to our country, and essential for myself as its servant.

Having troubled you with this exordium and egotism, I do not only thank you for the full and judicious observations, relative to the discontents of General Knox, at being appointed junior major-general in the augmented corps, but I shall do the same for your further occasional remarks on this or any other subject, which may be interesting and proper for me to know; that I may thereby regulate my own conduct in such a

---

views on the subject. In reply to the closing paragraph of the above letter, the Secretary of War said;

"The President is determined to place Hamilton last and Knox first. I have endeavoured all in my power to preserve your arrangement, but without effect. You shall be informed in a short time of the course of the business. I know not how it will be received by Hamilton, and can only hope, that he will not refuse to serve. I shall however soon know, and will instantly acquaint you." — *September 7th.*

* See APPENDIX, No. XII.

manner, as to render it beneficial and acceptable to the community, in matters which depend upon correct information, not in my power to obtain in the ordinary course.

Immediately after my acceptance of the appointment, with which the partiality of my country had honored me, and making an arrangement, with the Secretary of War, of the general officers for the regiments, I wrote to General Knox, stating briefly the principle upon which it was done; and I was not a little surprised to find in his answer an expression of great dissatisfaction at the measure.

To this I replied in a subsequent letter, and offered sentiments not dissimilar to those, which are contained in yours to me; with a view to show him, that, in the present organization, no other regard was had, or was intended to be paid, to the officers of an army, which had ceased to exist fourteen or fifteen years, than merely by running over the list of them to be reminded of those, who were most likely to answer public expectation in the formation of the new one, which was about to receive an entire new birth, and in which no officer of the old army could *expect*, much less *claim*, an appointment on any other ground than celebrity of character, established or supposed; of which the President, agreeably to the constitution, was to judge.

But General Knox, it would seem, views his junior station as a degradation, after having been the senior of both Hamilton and Pinckney; that it is estimating his military abilities at a cheap rate; and that it has been *contrived* to exclude him from the service. In a word, from the tenor of his letter, he appears to be determined, inasmuch as the nominations were given in on the same day, to claim precedency under some old regulation of Congress, and, if unsuccessful in the

attempt, to decline the appointment of major-general altogether.

How the matter stands between him and the President, and what may be the ultimate decision of the latter, I know not; but I know that the President ought to ponder well before he consents to a change of the arrangement.

It was my earnest desire, that the appointments, unless compelled by necessity, should not be precipitated; and, to prevent it if possible, I hastened prematurely the return of the Secretary of War to Philadelphia, offering, inconvenient as it would have been for me at that season, to set out on a day's notice for that place, if this could be accomplished; knowing that a better view of all circumstances and better means of information could be had there than here, and of course a more deliberate arrangement could be made, when probably it might have happened, that Knox would have been placed before Pinckney. Whether it be practicable to do it now is questionable.

Interesting as a good adjutant-general is to an army, and to the commander-in-chief in particular, and solicitous as I have expressed myself on this head, I never heard but from vague reports until the receipt of your letter, that Colonel North had been nominated to that office. Mr. Dayton would, I believe, have filled it with ability; and he or General Hand, the latter from his experience in it, commanded my wishes. Colonel Heth would, I have no doubt, make an excellent adjutant-general; but, as the State of Virginia has already given several officers of high rank and importance, and I expect will furnish the quartermaster-general in Colonel Carrington, than whom, considering where the operations are likely to be, I believe a better could not be found in the United States, it would have an invidious

appearance to propose him for that office. Besides, he wishes to come into my military family as an aid-de-camp, and is the only one to whom I have given the least reason to expect it, having informed all other applicants, that I choose to be perfectly free from all engagements until the time shall approach, when I must take the field, and when many circumstances must combine in my selection of aids. No member of this military family is yet engaged, except my old secretary Lear, in the same capacity. I do not, nevertheless, discourage applications, as my wish is, when the period shall arrive, to fix, as far as it may be in my power to ascertain the matter beforehand, on men of experience, accustomed to business, and of good dispositions; having regard, at the same time, to geographical situations. With great esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 14 September, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 7th instant from Trenton is before me; and no plan is yet decided on, that I can discover, for recruiting the augmented force, or even for appointing the officers therefor.

It is for the executive to account for this delay. Sufficient it is for me to regret, and I do regret it sorely; because that spirit and enthusiasm, which were inspired by the despatches from our envoys, that resentment which was roused by the treatment of our commissioners by the Directory, and by the demands which were made on them as a preliminary to negotiation by the latter, are evaporating fast; and the

recruiting service, which might have been successful, of the best men, a month ago, may be found very difficult a month hence, of the worst kind. The law passed before the middle of July, and was positive; and the middle of September has produced no fruit from it. This to me is inconceivable.

I must once more, too, my dear McHenry, request that your correspondence with me may be more full and communicative. You have a great deal of business, I shall acknowledge; but I scruple not to add, at the same time, that much of the important and interesting part of it will be to be transacted with the commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, to whom there ought to be no concealment or want of information. Short letters, therefore, taking *no notice* of suggestions or queries, are unsatisfactory and distressing. Considering the light in which I think my sacrifices have placed me, I should expect more attention from the *Secretary of War;* but from Mr. McHenry, as a friend and coadjutor, I certainly shall look for it. Compare then my letter to you of the 3d instant, which I wrote in much pain, from the debilitated state into which the fever had thrown me, with your acknowledgment thereof, dated the 7th, and judge yourself whether I could derive any satisfaction therefrom on the score of business. Nor to this moment, although you know my solicitude respecting the general staff of the army, and my asking the question in one of my letters in direct terms, what truth there was in the report of Colonel North's nomination to the office of adjutant-general, has there been the least notice taken of it.

I will defer saying any thing on the President's *new* arrangement of the three major-generals, until you shall

have communicated to me the result of Colonel Hamilton's answer.

What measures, if any, are pursuing to provide small arms, I know not; nor of what sort or length they are intended to be; but I think the gun and bayonet ought to be full as long as those, which we expect to meet, to give confidence to the soldiery.

If these, if the new invented artillery of Great Britain at the cannon-works in Scotland, if the horse-artillery, in short, if any other articles of foreign manufacture are needed, not a moment is to be lost in the importation. Besides their coming much higher after hostilities have commenced, the obtaining of them at all will be attended with hazard and delay.

I have written you a free and friendly letter. It is intended, and I hope will be received, in that light from, my dear Sir, your sincere friend, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 16 September, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your confidential letter dated Trenton the 10th instant, with its enclosures, has been duly received. The latter are returned. The contents of them have filled my mind with much disquietude and embarrassment; but it is impossible for me to make any move in consequence at this time, from the want of official grounds, without betraying your confidential communication.

I can perceive pretty clearly, however, that the matter is, or very soon will be, brought to the alternative of submitting to the President's forgetfulness of what I considered a compact or condition of acceptance of

the appointment, with which he was pleased to honor me, or of returning to him my commission. And as that compact was ultimately and at the time declared to him *through you*, in your letter written from this place, and the strongest part of it inserted *after* it was first drafted, at my request, to avoid misconception, I conceive I have a right, and accordingly do ask, to be furnished with a copy of it.*

You will recollect too, that, my acceptance being conditional, I requested you to take the commission back, that it might be restored or annulled according to the President's determination to accept or reject the terms on which I had offered to serve; and that, but for your assuring me it would make no difference whether I retained or returned it, and conceiving the latter might be considered an evidence of distrust, it would have been done. Subsequent events evince, that it would have been a measure of utility; for, though the case *in principle* is the same, yet such a memento of the fact could not so easily have been forgotten or got over.

After the declaration in the President's letter to you of August 29th,† which is also accompanied with other sentiments of an alarming nature, and his avowed readiness to take the responsibility of the measure upon himself, it is improbable that there will be any departure from the resolution he has adopted; but I should be glad, notwithstanding, to know the result of the representation made by the secretaries, as soon as it comes to hand; and, if there is no impropriety in the request, to be gratified with a sight of the memorial also. I am, &c.

---

* See this letter, dated July 12th, in the APPENDIX, No. XI.

† Contained in the *Extract* from Mr. McHenry's letter of September 19th. See APPENDIX, No. XIII.

P. S. If you see no impropriety in the measure, and do not object to it, it would be satisfactory to me to receive a copy of the powers, or instructions, from the President under which you acted when here.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

Mount Vernon, 24 September, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have seen the correspondence between the President of the United States and the Secretary of War, on the subject of the relative rank of the three major-generals first appointed. But as it was given in confidence, unaccompanied with an official letter, I had no ground on which I could proceed, without betraying that confidence. I have therefore written for an official account of the President's determination, as the foundation of the representation I propose to offer him on this occasion.

Until the result of this is known, I hope you will suspend a final decision, and let matters remain *in statu quo* till you hear again from your affectionate, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.†

Mount Vernon, 25 September, 1798.

SIR,

With all the respect, which is due to your public station, and with the regard I entertain for your private character, the following representation is presented

* See this paper, dated July 6th, in the APPENDIX, No. XI.

† For an explanation of the circumstances, which gave occasion for this letter, see APPENDIX, No. XIII.

to your consideration. If, in the course of it, any expression should escape me, which may appear to be incompatible with either, let the purity of my intentions, the candor of my declarations, and a due respect for my own character, be received as an apology.

The subject, on which I am about to address you, is not less delicate in its nature, than it is interesting to my feelings. It is the change, which you have directed to be made in the relative rank of the major-generals, which I had the honor of presenting to you by the Secretary of War; the appointment of an adjutant-general *after* the first nomination was rejected, and the *prepared* state you are in to appoint a third, if the second should decline, without the least intimation of the matter to me.

It would have been unavailing *after* the nomination and appointment of me to the chief command of the armies of the United States, without any previous consultation of my sentiments, to observe to you the delicate situation in which I was placed by that act. It was still less expedient to dwell more than I did on my sorrow, at being drawn from my retirement, where I fondly hoped to spend the few remaining years, which might be dispensed to me, if not in profound tranquillity, at least without public responsibility. But if you had been pleased, previously to the nomination, to inquire into the train of my thoughts upon the occasion, I would have told you with the frankness and candor, which I hope will ever mark my character, on what terms I would consent to the nomination, and you would then have been able to decide whether they were admissible or not.

This opportunity was not afforded *before* I was brought to public view. To declare them *afterwards* was all I could do, and this I did in explicit language

to the Secretary of War, when he honored me with your letter of the 7th of July, showed me his powers, and presented to me the commission. They were, that the general officers and general staff of the army should not be appointed without my concurrence. I extended my stipulation no further, but offered to give every information, and render every service in my power, in selecting good officers for the regiments.

It would be tedious to go into all the details, which led to this determination, but before I conclude my letter, I shall take the liberty of troubling you with some of them. Previously to the doing of which, however, let me declare, and I do declare in the most unequivocal manner, that I had no more in view in making this stipulation, than to insure the most eligible characters for these highly responsible offices, conceiving that my opportunities, both in the civil and military administration of the affairs of this country, had enabled me to form as correct an opinion of them as any other could do.

Neither the Secretary of War nor myself entertained any doubt, from your letters to me and instructions to him, that this was the meaning and object of his mission. Unwilling, however, to let a matter of such serious importance to myself remain upon uncertain ground, I requested that gentleman to declare this in *his official letter to you*, supposing, as was the case, that the one I should have the honor of writing to you might be laid before the public, and that to encumber it with stipulations of that sort would be improper. Nay more, as the acceptance was conditional, and you might or might not be disposed to accede to the terms, I requested him to take the commission back, to be annulled or restored according to your conception of the propriety or impropriety of

them. His remark upon this occasion was, that it was unnecessary, inasmuch as, if you did not incline to accept my services upon the condition they were offered, you would be under the necessity of declaring it, whilst, on the other hand, silence must be construed into acquiescence. This consideration, and believing that the latter mode would be most respectful, as the other might imply distrust of your intentions, arrested that measure.

This, Sir, is a true, candid, and impartial statement of facts. It was the ground on which I *accepted* and *retained* the commission, and was the authority on which I proceeded to the arrangement, that was presented to you by the Secretary of War.

Having *no idea*, that the general officers for the provisional army would be nominated at the time they were, I had not even contemplated characters for those appointments.

I will now respectfully ask, in what manner these stipulations on my part have been complied with?

In the arrangement made by me with the Secretary of War, the three major-generals stood, Hamilton, Pinckney, Knox; and in this order I expected their commissions would be dated. This, I conceive, must have been the understanding of the Senate, and certainly was the expectation of all those with whom I have conversed. But you have been pleased to order the last to be first, and the first to be last. Of four brigadiers for the provisional army, one, whom I never heard of as a military character, has been nominated and appointed, and another is so well known to all those, who served with him in the revolution, as for the appointment to have given the greatest disgust, and will be the means of preventing more valuable officers of that army from coming forward. One

adjutant-general has been, and another is ready to be appointed, in case of the non-acceptance of Mr. North, not only without any consultation with me, but without the least intimation of the intention; although in the letter I had the honor to write you on the 4th of July, in acknowledgment of your favor of the 22d of June preceding, and still more strongly in one of the same date to the Secretary of War, which, while here, his clerk was I know directed to lay before you, I endeavoured to show in a strong point of view how important it was, that this officer, besides his other qualifications, should be agreeable to the commander-in-chief, and possess his *entire* confidence.

To increase the powers of the commander-in-chief, or to lessen those of the President of the United States, I pray you to be persuaded was most foreign from my heart. To secure able coadjutors, in the arduous task I was about to enter upon, was my *sole* aim. This the public good demanded, and this must have been equally the wish of us both. But to accomplish it required an intimate knowledge of the *component* parts of the characters among us in the higher grades of the late army. And I hope, without incurring the charge of presumption, I may add that the opportunities I have had to judge of these are second to those of no one. It was too interesting to me, who had staked every thing which was dear and valuable upon the issue, to trust more to chance than could be avoided. It could not be supposed, that I was insensible to the risk I was about to run, knowing that the chances of losing were at least equal to those of increasing the reputation, which the partiality of the world had been pleased to bestow on me. No one then acquainted with these circumstances, the sacrifices I was about to make, and the impartiality

of my conduct in the various walks of life, could suppose that I had any other object in view, than to obtain the best aids the country afforded, and my judgment could dictate.

If an army had been in actual existence, and you had been pleased to offer the command of it to me, my course would have been plain. I should have examined the constitution of it, looked into the organization of it, and inquired into the character of its officers. As the army was to be raised, and the officers to be appointed, could it be expected, as I was no candidate for the office, that I should be less cautious, or less attentive to secure these advantages?

It was not difficult for me to perceive, that, if we entered into a serious contest with France, the character of the war would differ materially from the last we were engaged in. In the latter, time, caution, and worrying the enemy until we could be better provided with arms and other means, and had better disciplined troops to carry it on, was the plan for us. But if we should be engaged with the former, they ought to be attacked at every step, and if possible not suffered to make an establishment in the country, acquiring thereby strength from the disaffected and the slaves, whom I have no doubt they will arm, and for that purpose will commence their operations south of the Potomac.

Taking all these circumstances into view, you will not be surprised at my solicitude to intrench myself as I did; nor is it to be supposed, that I made the arrangement of the three major-generals without an eye to the possible consequences. I wished for time, it is true, to have effected it, hoping that an amicable adjustment might have taken place; and offered at a very short summons, inconvenient as it would have

been, to proceed to Philadelphia for that purpose; but as no subsequent notice was taken thereof, I presumed there were operative reasons against the measure, and did not repeat it.

It is proper too I should add, that, from the information which I received from various quarters, and through different channels, I had no doubt in my mind, that the current sentiment among the members of Congress, and particularly among those from New England, was in favor of Colonel Hamilton's being second in command, and this impression has been since confirmed in the most unequivocal manner by some respectable members of that body, whom I have myself seen and conversed with on the subject.

But if no regard was intended to be had to the *order* of my arrangement, why was it not altered before it was submitted to the Senate? This would have placed matters upon simple ground. It would then have been understood as it is at present, namely, that the gentlemen would rank in the order they are named; but the change will contravene this, and excite much conversation and unpleasant consequences.

"I cannot lay my hand readily upon the resolves of the old Congress, relative to the settlement of rank between officers of the same grade, who had been in service and were disbanded, while a part of the army remained in existence; but if I have a tolerable recollection of the matter, they are totally irrelevant to the present case. Those resolves passed, if I am not mistaken, at a time when the proportion of officers to men was so unequal as to require a reduction of the former, and when the army was about to undergo a reduction in part, and the officers might be called upon again. But will a case of this sort apply to the officers of an army, which has ceased to exist more

than fourteen years? I give it frankly as my opinion, if I have not entirely forgotten the principle on which the resolves took place, that it will not; and I as frankly declare, that the only motive I had for examining a list of the officers of that army was to be reminded of them.

If the rule contended for were to obtain, what would be the consequences, and where would the evil end? In all probability, resort would be had to the field-officers of the revolutionary army to fill similar grades in the augmented and provisional corps, which are to be raised. What then is to be done with General Dayton, who never ranked higher than captain? The principle will apply with equal force in that case, as in the case of Hamilton and Knox. The injury, if it is one, of putting a junior over the head of a senior officer of the last war, is not ameliorated by the nominations or appointments of them on different days. It is the act itself, not the manner of doing it, that affects it.

I have dwelt longer on this point than perhaps was necessary, in order to show, that in my opinion former rank in the revolutionary army ought to have no influence in the present case, farther than can be derived from superior experience, brilliant exploits, or general celebrity of character; and that, as the armies about to be raised are commencing *de novo*, the President has the right to make officers of citizens or soldiers at his pleasure, and to arrange them in any manner he shall deem most conducive to the public weal.

It is an invidious task at all times to draw comparisons, and I shall avoid it as much as possible; but I have no hesitation in declaring, that, if the public is to be deprived of the services of Colonel Hamilton

in the military line, the post he was destined to fill will not be easily supplied; and that this is the sentiment of the public, I think I can venture to pronounce. Although Colonel Hamilton has never acted in the character of a general officer, yet his opportunities, as the principal and most confidential aid of the commander-in-chief, afforded him the means of viewing every thing on a larger scale than those, whose attention was confined to divisions or brigades, who knew nothing of the correspondences of the commander-in-chief, or of the various orders to, or transactions with, the general staff of the army. These advantages, and his having served with usefulness in the old Congress, in the general convention, and having filled one of the most important departments of government with acknowledged abilities and integrity, have placed him on high ground, and made him a conspicuous character in the United States, and even in Europe.

To these, as a matter of no small consideration, it may be added, that, as a lucrative practice in the line of his profession is his most certain dependence, the inducement to relinquish it must in some degree be commensurate. By some he is considered an ambitious man, and therefore a dangerous one. That he is ambitious, I shall readily grant, but it is of that laudable kind, which prompts a man to excel in whatever he takes in hand. He is enterprising, quick in his perceptions, and his judgment intuitively great; qualities essential to a military character, and therefore I repeat, that his loss will be irreparable.

With respect to General Knox, I can say with truth, there is no man in the United States with whom I have been in habits of greater intimacy, no one whom I have loved more sincerely, nor any for whom I have had a greater friendship. But esteem, love, and friend-

ship can have no influence on my mind, when I conceive that the subjugation of our government and independence are the objects aimed at by the enemies of our peace, and when possibly our all is at stake.

In the first moments of leisure, after the Secretary of War left this place, I wrote a friendly letter to General Knox, stating my firm belief, that, if the French should invade this country with a view to the conquest or the division of it, their operations would commence at the southward, and endeavoured to show him, in that case, how all-important it was to engage General Pinckney, his numerous family, friends, and influential acquaintance *heartily* in the cause; sending him at the same time a copy of the arrangement, which I supposed *to be final;* and, in a subsequent letter, I gave him my opinion fully with respect to the relative situation of himself and Colonel Hamilton, not expecting, I confess, the difficulties which have occurred.

I will say but little relative to the appointment of the brigadiers before alluded to; but I must not conceal, that, after what had passed, and my understanding of the compact, my feelings were not a little wounded by the appointment of any, much more such characters, without my knowledge.

In giving these details I have far exceeded the limits of a letter, but I hope to be excused for the prolixity of it. My object has been to give you a clear and distinct view of my understanding of the terms, on which I received the commission with which you were pleased to honor me.

Long as this letter is, there is another subject not less interesting to the commander-in-chief of the armies, be he who he may, than it is important to the United States, which I beg leave to bring respectfully to your view. We are now near the end of September,

and not a man recruited, nor a battalion officer appointed, that has come to my knowledge. The consequence is, that the spirit and enthusiasm, which prevailed a month or two ago, and would have produced the *best* men, in a short time, are evaporating fast, and a month or two hence may induce but few, and those perhaps of the *worst* sort, to enlist. Instead, therefore, of having the augmented force in a state of preparation, and under a course of discipline, it is now to be raised, and possibly may not be in existence when the enemy is in the field. We shall have to meet veteran troops inured to conquest, with militia or raw recruits. The consequence is not difficult to conceive or foretell.

I have addressed you, Sir, with openness and candor, and I hope with respect, requesting to be informed, whether your determination to reverse the order of the three major-generals is final, and whether you mean to appoint another adjutant-general without my concurrence. With the greatest respect and consideration I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.*

TO G. W. SNYDER.†

Mount Vernon, 25 September, 1798.

SIR,

Many apologies are due to you for my not acknowledging the receipt of your obliging favor of the 22d

* See the President's answer in the APPENDIX, No. XIV.

† A clergyman residing at Fredericktown in Maryland. In his letter Mr. Snyder says he was born in Heidelberg, on the Rhine, and came to America in the year 1776. He sent to Washington a book entitled *Proofs of a Conspiracy, &c.*, in which was an account of the "Society of Illuminati," whose mischievous tenets Mr. Snyder feared might find their way into the Masonic lodges in the United States. "Upon serious reflection," said he, "I was led to think, that it might be within your power to prevent the horrid plan from corrupting the brethren of the lodges over which you preside."

ultimo, and for not thanking you at an earlier period for the book you had the goodness to send me.

I have heard much of the nefarious and dangerous plan and doctrines of the *Illuminati*, but never saw the book until you were pleased to send it to me. The same causes, which have prevented my acknowledging the receipt of your letter, have prevented my reading the book hitherto, namely, the multiplicity of matters, which pressed upon me before, and the debilitated state in which I was left after a severe fever had been removed; and which allows me to add little more now, than thanks for your kind wishes and favorable sentiments, except to correct an error you have run into of my presiding over the English lodges in this country. The fact is, I preside over none, nor have I been in one more than once or twice within the last thirty years. I believe, notwithstanding, that none of the lodges in this country are contaminated with the principles ascribed to the Society of the *Illuminati*. With respect, I am, Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 26 September, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your confidential letter of the 21st instant is before me, but the long letter which is promised therein has not got to hand. Probably the messenger, who carries this and other letters to the post-office this afternoon, may return with it.

As you have sent to the President extracts from my letter of the 16th, and informed him, that you thought it necessary to apprize me of his seeming

determination relative to the rank of Major-Generals Hamilton and Knox, I conceived I had sufficient ground to proceed upon, and have, accordingly, in a letter of yesterday's date given him my ideas in a long detail on the whole of that business, that I may know *at once* and *precisely* what I have to expect.

The rough draft of it I send for your perusal, but with an express desire that the contents may not be divulged, unless the result should make it necessary for me to proceed to the final step. You will readily perceive, that even the *rumor* of a misunderstanding between the President and me, while the breach can be repaired, would be attended with unpleasant consequences. If there is no disposition on his part to do this, the public must decide which of us is right and which wrong.

I thought it best to communicate my ideas to the President on this subject, as soon as I had ground to act upon; it being easier at all times to prevent an evil, than to provide a remedy for it.

The draft of my letter to the President you will please to return. I shall say nothing more, until I receive the letter you have promised, except that I am always, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 30 September, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

I have lately received information, which, in my opinion, merits attention. It is, that the brawlers against the measures of government in some of the most discontented parts of this State have all of a sudden

become silent; and, it is added, are very desirous of obtaining commissions in the army about to be raised.

This information did not fail to leave an impression upon my mind at the time I received it; but it has acquired strength from a publication I have lately seen to the same effect in one of the Maryland gazettes, between the author of which and my informant there could have been no interchange of sentiments.

The motives ascribed to them are, that in such a situation they would endeavour to divide and contaminate the army by artful and seditious discourses, and perhaps at a critical moment bring on confusion. What weight to give to these conjectures you can judge as well as I. But, as there will be characters enough of an opposite description, who are ready to receive appointments, circumspection is necessary. Finding the resentment of the people at the conduct of France too strong to be resisted, they have in appearance adopted their sentiments, and pretend that, notwithstanding the misconduct of the government has brought it upon us, yet, if an invasion should take place, it will be found that *they* will be among the first to defend it. This is their story at all elections and election meetings, and told in many instances with effect.

Whether there be little, much, or nothing in the information, I shall not take upon me to decide; but it appeared to me to be of sufficient moment to apprize you thereof.

With esteem and regard, I am, &c.

TO JAMES M^cHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 1 October, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your confidential letter of the 19th * ultimo did not reach Alexandria until the 28th. I thank you for the statement and details which it contains.

The President may have reasons, which will justify the non-execution of the law for augmenting the force of the United States. With my light I can discover none; but, if the force is required at all, I can see very serious evils resulting from the non-appointment of the battalion officers, and consequent delay in the recruiting service, for reasons mentioned in a former letter, and unnecessary to be repeated in this.

That Mr. Wolcott, on whom there may be more calls than he has funds conveniently to answer, is disposed to replenish the magazines at the expense of the recruiting service, I do not much wonder; but if he were more experienced in the *real* difference, not only in point of service but in point of experience also, between militia or raw recruits and disciplined troops, he would feel more for the officer, who was to conduct them, and for the resources of the treasury too, than he appears to do at present; for I think it is mathematically demonstrable, that ten thousand, to say nothing of the incompetency of them, drawn out for short terms of service, coming at different times, though required at one time, returning pointedly at the expiration of their term, with consumption of provisions, waste of the military stores, destruction of camp equipage of every species, and loss of arms, will cost

* See APPENDIX, No. XIII.

the public more than fifteen, I believe I might venture to say twenty thousand, well tutored and permanent troops. When militia are called upon, you have *two sets to pay* and *supply* at the same time. One set are raising and marching to supply the place of the other set, who will be going; and both sorts of such uncertain dependence, as to baffle all calculation on their strength.

If the treasury is unable to accomplish both objects completely, let the magazines be less stored, and the recruiting service proceed. Soldiers are not made in a day, but the munitions of war may be contracted for in an hour; and I believe the enemy will think the raising and training an army a more serious operation, than the replenishing of magazines, which at all times ought to be well stored.

Has Mr. Wolcott described the length of the musket and bayonet, the calibre of the former and shape of the latter? I again repeat, that they ought to be such as to place us on equal ground with the enemy we are to cope with. I am speaking of those he has, and is about to contract for; and I am of opinion a number of rifles ought also to be provided. They might be used to great advantage by skilful hands in a country covered with wood.

You request me to express a strong sentiment to Mr. Pickering, respecting clothing for the army. What has the Secretary of State to do with the clothing of the army?

Your letter of the 25th of August to the superintendent of military stores has produced no effect as yet, for no return of them is come to my hands.

As no mode is yet adopted by the President, by which the battalion officers are to be appointed, and as I think I stand upon very precarious ground in

my relation to him, I am not over zealous in taking *unauthorized* steps, when those that I thought *were authorized* are not likely to meet with much respect.

It will naturally occur to you, that to obtain information of proper characters for officers in the two Carolinas, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee, I must have recourse to others. If then the President should resolve upon a mode different from the one you have suggested, I shall be committed, and stand in an awkward predicament. I will, however, use some preliminary measures to accomplish your wishes. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 1 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

This letter will contain very little more, than an acknowledgment of the receipt of your letters of the 13th and 18th of last month, which came safe to hand.

The letter written by Mr. Wolcott to the President of the United States, and the representation made by me to him so soon as I received official information of the change intended by him in the relative rank of the major-generals, and of his departure in almost every other instance from what I considered a solemn compact, and the only terms on which I would, by an acceptance of the commission, hazard every thing dear and valuable to me, will soon bring matters to a close, so far as it respects myself. But, until the final result of them is known, the less there is said on the subject the better. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 15 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

The information contained in your letter of the 3d instant was highly grateful to me. Such communications are not only satisfactory, but are really useful; for, while I hold myself in readiness to obey the call of my country, it is expedient that I should have more authentic information, than newspaper inconsistencies, of the approaching or receding storm, that I may regulate my private concerns accordingly. So far then as you can give this with propriety, it will be received with thankfulness, and, if under the seal of confidence, it will be locked up in my own breast.

It is pleasing to hear, that we had so few ships in France when the Directory were pleased to lay an embargo thereon. I wish, on many accounts, that General Pinckney were safely landed in his own country.

We have nothing new in this quarter. An excessive drought, which still prevails, has been hurtful to our crops, and presses sorely upon the winter grain and grass seeds, which have been sown this autumn.

Maryland, instead of acquiring strength in her Federal representation by the last election, has lost ground. What will be the result of the elections in this State, in March next, is more I believe than any one can foretell at present. No stone is left unturned, that can affect the Federal interest, by the Democrats.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES M^cHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 15 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 2d, and three of the 5th instant, came duly to hand. In the first, you ask if I am acquainted with characters, who have talents and acquirements to fit them for the command of the corps of artillerists and engineers. I am so far from the possession of such knowledge, that I should be unwilling to hazard a recommendation of any to these important offices. Mr. Edward Rutledge of Charleston, South Carolina, commands the artillery corps of that State, and is a man of spirit and abilities. He is, besides, the particular friend of General Pinckney; but I have no idea, if he was agreeable to the President, that the rank of lieutenant-colonel commandant would induce him to come forward. Major Rivardi, now in the service of the United States, is, I am told, a scientific character, and a man of experience. He is a Swiss, and was some time in the service of Russia. How he has conducted himself in ours, your opportunities, better than any information of mine, will enable you to judge. He is gentlemanly in his appearance, and, by those who know him better than I do, is said to be a man of abilities and information.

With respect to the officers for the regiments, which, by the plan you submitted to the President, are to be raised in the southern division, I have made, and shall continue to make, such inquiries for suitable ones, as I can without committing myself, if it should not be approved; and in this State I might be able, I presume, with the aids I could derive, to make a tolerably good selection for the proportion or quota of the four regiments it would have to furnish. But this

is not to be done in the southern and western States without relying upon others; and in whom can more confidence be placed than in the general officers therein, who are to experience the good or the evil, which will result from proper or improper selections? My opinion therefore is, that, after the quota of men required from each State is ascertained, the least tardy and most efficient mode would be, to send a list of the applicants from each to the general officer or officers, who, from such information as can be obtained, may make a selection of officers of the different grades proportioned thereto, and know whether they will or will not serve in the grades allotted. This to be final, that the recruiting service may commence without further delay. But, if the President chooses to have a check upon the measure, let such arrangements be forwarded to the war office for sanction or alteration at his pleasure, and returned for the purpose abovementioned; for it is of the highest importance, that the augmented force should be raised and in training as soon as possible.

Generals Pinckney and Washington,* would, I am confident, be careful in their selection of officers for the troops to be raised in South Carolina and Georgia; and, from the character of General Davie,† I should hope he would not be less attentive to those to be taken from North Carolina. How this might be in the State of Tennessee, I cannot say; and with respect to Kentucky, I am more at a loss to express any opinion.

Enclosed is a sketch of the quotas, which the States in the southern division would have to furnish of the four regiments of infantry and six troops of horse,

* William Washington, of South Carolina, who had been appointed a brigadier-general in the provisional army.

† William R. Davie, of North Carolina, appointed a brigadier-general.

according to the census and state of the present representation.* If, upon due consideration, it should be approved, it might go into immediate execution; either by an immediate order from the war office, or mediately through the commander-in-chief, as shall be deemed best. In the former case, I conceive it ought to be accompanied with instructions to the generals, or persons to whom the order issues, to give, in the selection of fit characters, a preference first to officers of the revolutionary army, who are in the prime of life, who have distinguished themselves by their bravery, attention, and gentlemanly deportment, and who have not forfeited their pretensions to either of these qualifications since; secondly, if such are not to be found, next to young gentlemen of good families, liberal education, and high sense of honor; and, thirdly, in neither case to any who are known enemies to their own government; for they will as certainly attempt to create disturbances in the military, as they have done in the civil administration of their country. I am, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Mount Vernon, 18 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

The contents of your letter of the 13th instant, which I received last night, gave me much pleasure; and it has been increased since by the annunciation in the gazettes of General Pinckney's safe arrival at New York. I hope he will not play the second part of the difficulty created by General Knox.

The extracts of letters from our consuls, and other characters in France to you, are satisfactory and useful to me.

---

* See APPENDIX, No. XV.

My opinion always has been, however necessary to be in a state of preparation, that no formidable invasion is to be apprehended from France, while Great Britain and that country are at war; not from any favorable disposition the latter has towards us, but from actual inability to transport troops and the munitions of war, while their ports are blockaded. That they would willingly, and perhaps necessarily, employ their forces in such an enterprise, I have li'tle doubt, unless adverse fortune in their foreign relations, a revolution at home, or a wonderful change of sentiment in the governing powers of their country, should take place.

If any thing in the conduct of their agents could excite astonishment, it would be Talleyrand's effrontery, duplicity, and supposed diplomatic skill, in his management of matters with Mr. Gerry; but, as his object by those, who are not determined to be blind, may be read as they run, it is unnecessary to comment upon it. And with respect to Mr. Gerry, his own character and public satisfaction require better evidence, than his letter to the Minister of Foreign Relations, to prove the propriety of his conduct during his envoyship.*

I fear, from the paragraph which you have extracted from a Paris paper of the 23d of August, relative to Madame de Lafayette, that the General and his son are on their passage to this country. I had a letter from him dated in May, wherein he says, that her health was too much impaired to attempt a sea voyage at that time, and therefore that she and the female part of his family would go to France, while he and his son would visit the United States, where he expected

* For a full account of the mission to France, and the reasons for the course taken by Mr. Gerry, see AUSTIN'S *Life of Gerry*, Vol. II. pp. 190-294; PICKERING'S *Review*, &c. pp. 110-143.

to arrive in the month of September. On public and his own private account, I had hoped that would not happen while matters are in the train they are at present; but, as one part of the information appears to have been accomplished, the other may be expected. With much truth and sincere regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

Mount Vernon, 18 October, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

The gazettes have announced your safe arrival at New York. On which happy event I most sincerely congratulate you, Mrs. Pinckney, and family. We were under no small apprehensions on your account. Although nothing is said respecting it, we hope Miss Pinckney's health is perfectly restored.

As it is not probable, that you will travel by water to Charleston, it is unnecessary, I trust, to add, that we should be exceedingly glad to see you at this place, on your route by land; and that you would make it one of your halting-places. Mrs. Washington and Miss Custis unite in every good wish, and in respectful compliments to Mrs. Pinckney, Miss Pinckney, and yourself, with, my dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Mount Vernon, 21 October, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Several causes have concurred to retard the acknowledgment of the receipt of your favor of the 26th

of August. Not knowing what the President's final decision would be, and not perceiving that I could say more to you on the subject of relative rank, than I had done in former letters, unless, to dilate on the several points which had before been touched, (and this appeared to me to be unnecessary, as your own ideas would anticipate all I could say), I delayed from day to day to do what I am now in the act of doing, that is, writing to you.

I can again, my dear Sir, with much truth and sincerity repeat to you the declaration made on a former occasion, namely, that, if an amicable arrangement of precedence could have been settled between Generals Hamilton, Pinckney, and yourself, previous to the nomination, it would have been perfectly satisfactory to me; but, driven as I was to make it myself, at the time and in the manner it was transmitted, I was governed by the best views and best evidence I could obtain, of the public sentiment relative thereto. The Senate acted upon it under an impression, that it was to remain so, and in that light the matter is understood by the public; and it would be uncandid not to add, that I have found no cause since to believe that I mistook that sentiment. Let me add further, that, as an army was to be raised *de novo*, fourteen years after the revolutionary troops had ceased to exist, I do not see that any resolution of the ancient Congress can apply at this day to the officers of that army. If it does, and the matter is viewed by others as it is by you, will any field-officer of that army serve under General Dayton? Would it not deprive the President of the advantage of selection and arrangement? And what perplexities and difficulties would not follow, if this idea and conduct should prevail generally? Accompanied with the opinion which you seem to have

imbibed of incidental rank, few knowing and deserving officers of this description would feel very easy under such a decision, or be content with a *feather*, if they conceived that rank meant nothing, when inserted in their commissions.

On what ground did Baron Steuben command a separate corps in the State of Virginia in the year 1781, and Colonel Hamilton a select one at the siege of York, if incidental rank does not give command according to circumstances and the discretion of the commanding general?

But I am running into details, which I did not intend. It would, if you could reconcile it to your own feelings, give me sincere pleasure to see you in the augmented corps, a major-general.

We shall have either *no war*, or a *severe contest*, with France; in either case, if you will allow me to express my opinion, this is the most eligible time for you to come forward. In the first case, to assist with your counsel and aid in making judicious provisions and arrangements to avert it; in the other case, to share in the glory of defending your country, and, by making all secondary considerations yield to that great and primary object, display a mind superior to embarrassing punctilios at so critical a moment as the present.

After having expressed these sentiments, with the frankness of undisguised friendship, it is hardly necessary to add, that, if you should finally decline the appointment of major-general, there is none to whom I would give a more decided preference as an aid-de-camp, the offer of which is highly flattering, honorable, and grateful to my feelings, and for which I entertain a high sense.* But, my dear General Knox, and here

* See Knox's letter of August 26th, in the APPENDIX, No. XII.

again I speak to you in the language of candor and friendship, examine well your mind upon this subject. Do not unite yourself to the suite of a man, whom you may consider as the primary cause of what you call a degradation, with unpleasant sensations. This, while it was gnawing upon you, would, if I should come to the knowledge of it, make me unhappy; as my first wish would be, that my military family and the whole army should consider themselves as a band of brothers, willing and ready to die for each other. I shall add no more than assurances of the sincere friendship and affection, with which I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mount Vernon, 21 October, 1798.

SIR,

The letter, with which you were pleased to honor me, dated the 9th instant, was received by the last mail, and demands my particular acknowledgments.

It was with sincere concern I received the account of Mrs. Adams's low state of health, and your consequent indisposition. If my fervent wishes would restore her and you to perfect health, this object would soon be accomplished; and in these wishes Mrs. Washington unites with great cordiality. In her behalf and for myself, I thank you for your kind wishes respecting us. She is as well as usual, and I am quite recovered of the fever with which I was afflicted some time ago, and nearly so of the debility in which it left me.

If the office of adjutant-general had been vacant by the non-acceptance of Mr. North, no one could have filled it more agreeably to my wishes, than either of

the gentlemen suggested by me in the arrangement made with the Secretary of War. Of course General Dayton would have been an acceptable appointment. It appears, however, by a letter I have lately received from the war office, that Mr. North has not declined the honor you did him. With great consideration and respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 21 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

The last post to Alexandria brought me a letter from the President of the United States, in which I am informed that he had signed and given the commissions to yourself and Generals Pinckney and Knox at the same date, in hopes that an amicable adjustment or acquiescence might take place among you. But, if these hopes should be disappointed, and controversies should arise, they will of course be submitted to me, as commander-in-chief, and if, after all, any one should be so obstinate as to appeal to him from the judgment of the commander-in-chief, he was determined to confirm that judgment.

General Knox is fully acquainted with my sentiments on this subject, and I hope no fresh difficulties will arise with General Pinckney. Let me entreat you, therefore, to give without delay your full mind to the Secretary of War. At present I will only add, that I am always, &c.

TO JAMES M^CHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 21 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 16th instant came by the last mail.* The enclosures are well calculated to effect their objects. But the explicit declaration contained in the one to General Knox, added to his knowledge of my sentiments on the subject of relative rank, leaves little hope in my mind, that he will obey your summons, and render his aid in the manner required of him.

I hope no difficulty will occur with General Pinckney; and, if he cannot be prevailed on to remain at the seat of government until the 10th of November, the last day allowed for the assembling of the major-

* From this letter it appeared, that a final determination had at length passed, in regard to the relative rank of the major-generals, and that the commissions had been made out according to the first plan. The following is an extract.

"*War Department, October 16th.* The President, on the 30th of September, enclosed to me commissions for the three major-generals of the army, signed and dated on the same day.

"When I considered the communications, which may be expected from this department at the time of presenting his commission to each of the generals, I found myself embarrassed respecting the course he meant I should pursue on the occasion. It was my earnest wish to avoid the renewal of a subject, that had already been attended with too many unpleasant circumstances by returning the question upon him for more precise instructions. After considerable deliberation, therefore, and as the most respectful course to him, I at last was induced to transmit the commissions to Generals Hamilton and Knox, and to inform them, that I considered the order of nomination and approval by the Senate as determining their relative rank.

"I have also, my dear Sir, written to Generals Hamilton and Knox, calling them into service, and soliciting their presence, as soon as possible, and in all events by the 10th of November. I suggested also to the President, that it would be desirable I should be authorized to require your attendance, and that his own presence would be important and give facility to all measures relative to this meeting."

generals, that you will avail yourself of all his information relative to the characters best qualified to officer the corps allotted to the States of South Carolina and Georgia; and as far as his knowledge extends of those of North Carolina and Tennessee also.

I have said in the beginning of this letter, that the enclosures were well calculated to effect their objects, but I must except that part of them, which relates to the officering of the new corps in the southern and western States, as greatly inferior to the one I suggested in my last letter to you, dated the 15th instant; first, because it involves more delay; and, secondly, because the chance of obtaining good officers is not equal.

If the President of the United States, or the Secretary of War, had a personal and intimate knowledge of the characters of the applicants, the mode suggested by me would be indelicate and improper; but at such a distance, and in cases where information must govern, from whom, as I observed in my former letter, can it be so much relied on, as from those whose interest, honor, and reputation are pledged for its accuracy?

The applications are made chiefly through members of Congress. These, oftentimes to get rid of them, oftener still perhaps for local and electioneering purposes, and to please and gratify their party, more than from any real merit in the applicant, are handed in, backed by a solicitude for success in order to strengthen their interest. Possibly no injustice would be done, if I were to proceed a step further, and give it as an opinion, that most of the candidates brought forward by the opposition members possess sentiments similar to their own, and might poison the army by disseminating them, if they were appointed. If, however, the plan suggested by you is to be adopted, and indeed

in any case, you will no doubt see the propriety of obtaining all the information you can from Major-General Pinckney; and, if he accepts his appointment, and cannot be prevailed on to remain with you until the other major-generals assemble, of requesting him to call on Brigadier-General Davie on his route to Charleston, and, after a full and free conversation with him on fit characters to officer the quota of troops from the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, if he can aid in it, to inform you of the result without delay.

I hardly think it will be in my power to attend at Trenton or Philadelphia at the time allotted to the major-generals; first, because I am yet in a convalescent state, (though perfectly recovered from the fever,) so far at least as to avoid exposure and consequent colds; secondly, my secretary, Mr. Lear, has had a severe fever, and is now very low, and several others of my family are much indisposed; and, thirdly and principally, because I see no definitive ground to proceed upon, if I should go, from any thing that has hitherto appeared. Nor is it probable you will have received the President's instructions, and General Knox's answer, in time to serve me with a notice of the result by the 10th of November; I mean, for me to get there, on or about that day.

If General Pinckney could be prevailed on to remain with you, and there was a moral certainty of meeting Generals Hamilton and Knox, I would, maugre the inconvenience and hazard I might run, attempt to join them, for the valuable purpose of projecting a plan in concert with you and them, which might be ineffectually accomplished at a partial meeting. I shall therefore stand prepared, as well as the situation of things will admit, and wait your full communication on these several points, and govern myself accordingly. I am, &c.

TO HENRY KNOX.

Mount Vernon, 23 October, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

The enclosed, although of old date, is just come to hand. And believing you are still the secretary-general of the Society of the Cincinnati, I transmit it to you, to be laid before the next general meeting of its delegates, as there is no probability that I shall be at it myself.

Since my letter to you of the 21st, I have received one from the Secretary of War, informing me of General Pinckney's arrival, and acceptance of his appointment in the army of the United States; and his request, that the major-generals of the augmented force would be at Trenton or Philadelphia by the 10th of next month; expressing at the same time an earnest wish that I could be present. Inconvenient as it will be to me, and perhaps hazardous, I will make exertion to be there at that time; and I need not add, that it would give me pleasure to find you among them, as many important points will come before them.

I am always yours, &c.*

TO WILLIAM R. DAVIE, BRIGADIER-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 24 October, 1798.

SIR,

I am not informed of the cause or causes, which have impeded the appointment of the regimental officers agreeably to the act "To augment the army of

* General Knox did not accept the appointment of major-general. His letter, and one from General Pinckney, in reply to those in which their commissions were enclosed by the Secretary of War, are contained in the APPENDIX, No. XVI.

the United States, and for other purposes." The want of which has of course, unpropitiously it is to be feared, retarded the recruiting service; nor do I know that any plan is yet adopted to effect either of these purposes.

But, the Secretary of War having suggested to me, that it was probable four of the twelve regiments of infantry and the six troops of light dragoons would be raised in the States south of the Potomac, including Kentucky and Tennessee, and requesting me to give him assistance in selecting proper characters for officers in the different grades therefor, I know of no expedient so likely to give it efficacy as to call upon the general officers in each State, lately nominated by the President, for their aid; the presumption being, that the reputation of the army in which they may have to act a conspicuous part, and their own honor and responsibility, will put them above local attachments and self-interested views, and consequently produce more circumspection in the selection of fit and proper characters for officers, than is likely to be obtained by any other means. It is on this ground I have taken the liberty to address you, and hope for an excuse.

Pursuing the principle, by which the Secretary of War seems to have been governed, about one regiment of infantry and a troop of dragoons would fall to the lot of North Carolina and Tennessee; say nine companies of the first, and the company of dragoons to the former, and a company of infantry to the latter.

To assist you as much as is in my power in the accomplishment of this work, I enclose to you a list of all the field-officers of the North Carolina line, who served to the close of the revolutionary war, and a

list of the present applicants for commissions; designating their places of residence, the rank they solicit, and by whom they are recommended or brought forward.

My opinion is, that, in making a selection of the field-officers, an entire range of the State should be taken; but, in the company officers, regard should be had to distribution, as well for the purpose of facilitating the recruiting service, as for other considerations. And, where officers of celebrity in the revolutionary army can be obtained, who are yet in the prime of life, habituated to no bad courses, and well-disposed, a preference ought to be given to them. Next to these, gentlemen of character, liberal education, and, as far as the fact can be ascertained without experience, men who will face danger in any shape in which it can appear; for, if we have a land war, it will be sharp and severe. I must beg leave to add, that all violent opposers of the government, and French partisans, should be avoided, or they will disseminate the poison of their principles in the army, and split into parties what ought to be a band of brothers.

As this application is hypothetical, no decided plan being formed, you will please to consider it and the contents of this letter in all its parts as given in confidence. The papers you will be so good as to return, with the selection of the officers for the troops I have mentioned for the States of North Carolina and Tennessee; and, for a very particular reason, the sooner it could be done and sent me, the more agreeable it would be.

It might not be amiss to set down the names of more officers of each grade, than are really wanting for the regiment and troop; but, that I may know the estimation in which they stand, you will be pleased to place those of each grade numerically. I am, &c.

TO G. W. SNYDER.

Mount Vernon, 24 October, 1798.

REVEREND SIR,

I have your favor of the 17th instant before me, and my only motive for troubling you with the receipt of this letter is, to explain and correct a mistake, which I perceive the hurry in which I am obliged often to write letters has led you into.

It was not my intention to doubt, that the doctrines of the *Illuminati* and the principles of *Jacobinism* had not spread in the United States. On the contrary, no one is more fully satisfied of this fact than I am.

The idea that I meant to convey was, that I did not believe that the lodges of freemasons in this country had, as societies, endeavoured to propagate the diabolical tenets of the former, or pernicious principles of the latter, if they are susceptible of separation. That individuals of them may have done it, or that the founder, or instrument employed to found the *Democratic Societies* in the United States, may have had these objects, and actually had a separation of the people from their government in view, is too evident to be questioned.

My occupations are such, that little leisure is allowed me to read newspapers or books of any kind. The reading of letters and preparing answers absorb much of my time. With respect, I remain, Sir, &c.

TO JAMES ANDERSON.*

Mount Vernon, 3 November, 1798.

MR. ANDERSON,

By the way of Boston I have just received a letter from Mr. Richard Parkinson, dated Liverpool, 28th of August. The contents of this letter have surprised me; and, that you may know from whence this surprise has proceeded, I shall lodge in your hands, as I am going from home and may be absent four or five weeks,† Mr. Parkinson's first and second letters to me, and my answer to him, a duplicate and I think a triplicate of which I forwarded.

By this correspondence you will perceive, that Mr. Parkinson, through the medium of Sir John Sinclair, had seen the plans of my Mount Vernon farms, and was acquainted with the terms on which they were to be let. These terms I also deposite with you. It appears moreover by his first letter, dated the 28th of August, 1797, that he intended to be in this country in March, and by his second letter of the 27th of September following, that his arrival might be delayed until April or May. It is evident, also, from the tenor of these letters, that he knew my farms could not remain unengaged longer than the month of September. Yet he neither comes, sends an agent to act for him, nor even writes a line to account for the delay, and to know on what footing his former proposition stood.

Under these circumstances, I had no more expectation of Mr. Parkinson's arrival (especially with such a

* The principal manager of General Washington's farms.

† At Philadelphia, for the purpose of meeting the Secretary of War and the major-generals on the 10th of November, to arrange the Provisional Army.

costly cargo as he represents), than I had of seeing Sir John Sinclair himself, until his letter of the 28th of August from Liverpool came to hand.

Nor under the circumstances I have detailed, which will appear correct from the papers I leave, do I know what Mr. Parkinson's views now are. He surely could not expect, after having placed the occupancy of one of my farms on a contingency, that is, his liking it upon examination thereof, after promising that this examination should take place by the month of May last, after letting me hear nothing more from him for a whole year, and after knowing that I was obliged to make arrangements for the ensuing year by the month of September in the present year, to find a farm ready for his reception in November.

If he did not expect this, Mr. Parkinson stands in no other relation to me, than he does to any other gentleman in this country; and, if he did expect it, it may with justice be observed, that he has done so unwarranted by the information that was given him, and has entered upon the measure precipitately, having made no adequate provision for the heavy expense he is running into. But as matters are circumstanced, the question *now* is, not what ought to have been, but what can be, done to serve him.

With respect to my paying eight hundred and fifty pounds for the freight of the vessel, it is beside the question altogether, for the best of all reasons, namely, because I have not the means; and, with respect to animals which are said to be embarked, I would put myself to greater or less inconvenience in providing for them, upon just and reasonable terms, according to what shall appear to be his intention in regard to the River Farm. If it be to lease it on the terms which have been proposed, if there is a prospect of my being

secured in letting it, and a prospect that the bargain will be durable, and lastly if you can devise any expedient by which the business can be accomplished; as it respects the coming and the going of overseers, the negroes, stock, and growing grain, I should be well disposed to lend all the aid in my power towards the temporary accommodation of the animals he has brought over; except the stallions, for which, and more especially for their keepers, who are generally very troublesome people, I have no convenience at any of the farms; and to suffer them to be in the barns or stables with their horses would be to risk the whole by fire. Nor have I any place at the Mansion-House for either horses or men, as the conveniences thereat are not more than adequate to the permanent and occasional demand by visiters.

In a word, in the present aspect of things, and without seeing Mr. Parkinson or knowing under what auspices he comes, I scarcely know what opinion to express respecting him, or what is proper to be done in the business; and therefore must leave it to you to form an opinion when you can take a nearer view of the subject after his arrival, if this should happen during my absence, and to act accordingly. To obtain a good tenant for the River Farm on just terms, with the prospects before mentioned, would be an inducement to me to go great lengths in a temporary accommodation; but, if this is not to be expected from Mr. Parkinson, I feel no obligations on my part to rectify mistakes, which I had no hand in causing, and endeavoured to guard against. I remain your friend and well-wisher.*

* Mr. Parkinson arrived at Mount Vernon during General Washington's absence at Philadelphia. The vessel in which he sailed from Liverpool touched first at Norfolk, and then ascended the Potomac

TO MAJOR-GENERALS HAMILTON AND PINCKNEY.

QUERIES.

Philadelphia, 10 November, 1798.

1. Is an invasion of the United States by France to be apprehended whilst that power continues at war with Great Britain?

2. In case such an invasion should take place, what part of the United States, in their opinion, is most likely to be first attacked?

3. Is it probable that the French will, in the way of exchange, or by other means, become possessed of the Floridas and Louisiana?

4. In case of such an event, what will probably be the consequences, as they relate to the United States? What measures will be best to counteract them? And can those measures be carried promptly into effect by the commander-in-chief of the armies? Or must they be previously submitted to the war-office? This question, it will be perceived, presupposes a force in existence.

5. What can be done to supply our present deficiency of engineers? From whence, and by what

---

River to Alexandria, where he put on shore his horses, cattle, and pigs, having lost many on the passage. He did not establish himself at Mount Vernon, but travelled as far as New York, and finally returned to the neighbourhood of Baltimore, where he stayed two or three years, and then went home to England, and published in two volumes a book, which he called *A Tour in America*. This work contains copious details of the author's crosses and disappointments. He was dissatisfied with every thing he saw in the United States, and represents the poorness of the soil to be such, that no English farmer could cultivate it with the smallest hope of success. He says, however, that he was treated in a very friendly manner by General Washington; although he seems to have been not a little amazed, that hospitality should abound where the land was so poor.

means, are they to be obtained? Should a Frenchman be employed at any rate?

6. Would not riflemen, in the place of light infantry, be eligible as a component part of each regiment? And, in that case, would Ferguson's rifles claim a preference?

7. Under the idea, that each grand division of the United States is to furnish four regiments of the augmented force, and each State according to the census is to raise its proportion, how many places in each (its extent being considered), and where, ought to be assigned as rendezvous during the recruiting service? At what place ought the general rendezvous in each State to be fixed during the said period? And at what place or places in the United States ought the augmented force to assemble? If in more than one place, how many, where, and the number at each?

8. Of how many pieces of ordnance, of what sorts, and of what calibre, ought the park of artillery to consist, independently of what is attached to brigades or regiments? And how many ought each of these to have?

9. Would it be advisable, after an adequate force is recruited, to withdraw the troops which at present occupy the posts on our northern and western frontiers, replacing them with new-raised troops?

10. Of how many ranks do the French form their line of battle generally? Do they make much use of pikes? And would it be an eligible weapon, with which to arm part of our soldiery, as that is the nation with which we expect to contend? General Pinckney may from personal observation be enabled to solve these two questions.

QUERIES RELATIVE TO SMALLER MATTERS;

but meriting consideration, as an army is now commencing more systematically than formerly, the rules, regulations, and distinctions in which may give a tone to measures, that may prevail hereafter.

1. If the clothing of the regiments, and the fashion of that clothing, with distinctions between one regiment and another, are not already ordered by the proper authorities, and in train of execution, what had they best be?

2. Would not cotton, or (still more so) flannel, be advisable for shirting and linings for the soldiers?

3. What had best be the distinctions in dress, in the badges, and other peculiarities between the commander-in-chief and his suite, the major-generals and their aids; between the latter and the brigadiers and theirs; and between these again and the regimental officers? Also, among the regimental officers themselves, and commissioned and non-commissioned? And whether the staff (not in the line of the army) of the different departments, both commissioned and warrant officers, ought not to be designated by their dress, or some appropriate mark or badge; and in every case be compelled to wear them, as well for the purpose of denoting the corps to which they belong, as a means by which irregularities, rioting, and improper conduct may be discouraged with more ease?

4. As there have been many objections to, and remarks made upon, the black cockade (being that of Great Britain), might not something be devised by way of annexation thereto, to distinguish it from that of any other nation? I have seen, and it appeared to have no bad effect, a small eagle (of pewter, tin, and in some instances silver) fixed by way of button

in the centre of the rose cockade, which was not only very distinguishable, but somewhat characteristic.

The sooner these queries are taken into consideration, and opinions given on them, the more agreeable will it be to, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERALS HAMILTON AND PINCKNEY.

Philadelphia, 12 November, 1798.

SIR,

Herewith you will be furnished with the copy of a letter from the Secretary of War to me, suggesting many important matters for consideration and to be reported on.*

It is my desire, that you will bestow serious and close attention on them, and be prepared to offer your opinion on each head, when called upon.

I also propose, for your consideration and opinion, a number of queries, which had been noted by me previous to the receipt of the Secretary's letter. In stating these I had endeavoured to avoid, and make them additional to, the objects which the Secretary of War, in a letter to me dated the 16th ultimo, informed me would be subjects for my consideration. I find, however, that several of them in substance are contained in his last letter. But, as they were digested previous thereto, and written, I shall, to save copying, lay them before you as they are, without expunging those parts, which now appear in the Secretary's statement. With very great esteem and regard, I am, Gentlemen, &c.

---

* See APPENDIX, No. XVII.

TO ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD.

Philadelphia, 22 November, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 13th instant enclosing a publication under the signature of GRACCHUS, on the alien and sedition laws, found me at this place deeply engaged in business.

You ask my opinion of these laws, professing to place confidence in my judgment. For this compliment I thank you. But to give opinions unsupported by reasons might appear dogmatical, especially as you have declared that GRACCHUS has produced "thorough conviction in your mind of the unconstitutionality and inexpediency of the acts above mentioned." To go into an explanation on these points I have neither leisure nor inclination, because it would occupy more time than I have to spare.

But I will take the liberty of advising such as are not "thoroughly convinced," and whose minds are yet open to conviction, to read the pieces and hear the arguments, which have been adduced in favor of, as well as those against, the constitutionality and expediency of those laws, before they decide; and consider to what lengths a certain description of men in our country have already driven, and seem resolved further to drive matters, and then ask themselves if it is not time, and expedient, to resort to protecting laws against aliens (for citizens you certainly know are not affected by that law), who acknowledge no allegiance to this country, and in many instances are sent among us, as there is the best circumstantial evidence to prove, for the express purpose of poisoning the minds of our people, and sowing dissensions among them, in order to alienate their affections from

the government of their choice, thereby endeavouring to dissolve the Union, and of course the fair and happy prospects, which were unfolding to our view from the revolution.

But, as I have before observed, I have no time to enter the field of politics; and therefore shall only add my best respects to the good family at New Post, and the assurance of being, dear Sir, your very humble servant.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 13 December, 1798.*

SIR,

Since my arrival at this place, I have been closely engaged, with the aid of Generals Hamilton and Pinckney, in fulfilling the objects of your letter of the 10th of November. The result is now submitted.

The first two questions you propose, respecting the appointment of the officers and men of the troops to be raised, in virtue of the act of Congress of the 16th of July last, among districts and States, will naturally be answered together.

1. As to the appointment of the commissioned officers of the infantry, no particular reason is discovered to exist at the present period for combining the States into districts; but it is conceived to be expedient to adopt as a primary rule the relative representative

* General Washington had now been a month in Philadelphia, employed in concerting with the major-generals the arrangements for raising and organizing the *Provisional Army*. This letter, and the one that follows it, contain the results of their deliberations. They were drafted by General Hamilton, but signed officially by the commander-in-chief. The *Questions* of the Secretary of War, to which reference is made, are contained in the APPENDIX, No. XVII.

population of the several States. The practice of the government on other occasions in the appointment of public officers has had regard, as far as was practicable, to the same general principle, as one which, by a distribution of honors and emoluments among the citizens of the different States, tends both to justice and to public satisfaction. This principle, however, must frequently yield to the most proper selection of characters among those willing as well as qualified to serve, and sometimes to collateral considerations, which, arising out of particular cases, do not admit of precise specification. In the application of the rule in this, as in other instances, qualifications of it must be admitted. The arrangement, which will be now offered, proceeds on this basis. You will observe, that it does not deviate from the table you have presented.

2. As to the non-commissioned officers and privates, it is conceived to be both unnecessary and inexpedient to make any absolute appointment among the States. It is unnecessary, because, contemplating it as desirable that the men shall be drawn in nearly equal proportions from the respective States, this object, where circumstances are favorable, will be attained by the very natural and proper arrangement of assigning to the officers, who shall be appointed, recruiting districts within the States to which they belong. It is inexpedient, because if it shall happen, that the proportion of fit men cannot easily be had in a particular State, there ought to be no obstacle to obtaining them elsewhere.

3. As to the officers of the dragoons, it does not seem advisable to confine the selection to any subdivision of the United States. Though very strong conjectures may be formed, as to the quarter in which they would probably be employed in the case of

invasion, there can be nothing certain on this point, if this were even the criterion of a proper arrangement. And it may be presumed, that it will conduce most to the general satisfaction to exclude considerations of local aspect. But from the small number of this corps, which is to be raised, it would be found too fractional, and, for that among other reasons, inconvenient to aim at a proportional distribution among all the States. It is therefore supposed most advisable to be governed principally by a reference to the characters, who have occurred as candidates; leaving the inequality in the distribution to be remedied in the event of a future augmentation of this description of troops. The proportion at present is in various views inadequate; a circumstance, which it may be presumed will of course be attended to, should the progress of public danger lead to an extension of military preparations.

The materials furnished by you, with the addition of those derived from other sources, are insufficient for a due selection of the officers, whom it is proposed to allot to the States of Connecticut, North and South Carolina, and Georgia. Hence the selection for these States must of necessity be deferred. It is conceived, that the best plan for procuring the requisite information and accelerating a desirable conclusion, as to the three last-mentioned States, will be to choose Major-General Pinckney, who will avail himself of the assistance of Brigadier-Generals Davie and Washington, to make the arrangement of those officers provisionally, and subject to the ratification of the President. It will be in their power to ascertain who are best *qualified* among those *willing* to serve; which will at the same time assure a good choice, and avoid the disappointment and embarrassment of refusals. As to Connecticut, you are aware of the progress that has been

made, and of the misapprehension which has occasioned an obstacle to a definitive arrangement. You will, it is presumed, be speedily in possession of the further information necessary, and, having it, can without difficulty complete the arrangement for this State.

The third, fourth, and fifth of your questions may likewise be answered together.

The act for augmenting the army is peremptory in its provisions. The bounds of executive discretion, as to the forbearance to execute such a law, might perhaps involve an investigation nice in its own nature, and of a kind which it is generally most prudent to avoid. But it may safely be said negatively, for reasons too plain to be doubted, that the voluntary suspension of the execution of a similar law could not be justified but by considerations of decisive cogency. The existence of any such considerations is unknown.

Nothing has been communicated respecting our foreign relations to induce the opinion, that there has been any change in the situation of the country, as to external danger, which dictates an abandonment of the policy of the law in question. It needs not now be examined how far it may be at any time prudent to relinquish measures of security, suggested by the experience of accumulated hostility, merely because there are probable symptoms of approaching accommodation. It needs not be urged, that, if such symptoms exist, they are to be ascribed to the measures of vigor adopted by the government, and may be frustrated by a relaxation in those measures, affording an argument of weakness or irresolution. For, has it not been in substance stated from the highest authority, that no decisive indications have been given by France of a disposition to redress our past wrongs and do us future justice; that her decree, alleged to

be intended to restrain the depredations of French cruisers on our commerce, has not given, and from its nature cannot give, relief; that the most hostile of the acts, by which she has oppressed the commerce of neutrals, and that which subjects to capture and condemnation neutral vessels and cargoes, if any part of the latter be of British production or fabric, not only has not been abrogated, but has recently received an indirect confirmation; and that hitherto nothing is discoverable in the conduct of France, which ought to change or relax our measures of defence?

Could it be necessary to enforce by argument so authoritative a declaration, as it relates to the immediate object of consideration, these, among other reflections, would at once present themselves.

Though it may be true, that some late occurrences have rendered the prospect of invasion by France less probable or more remote, yet, duly considering the rapid vicissitudes, at all times, of political and military events, the extraordinary fluctuations, which have been peculiarly characteristic of the still subsisting contest in Europe, and the more extraordinary position of most of the principal nations of that quarter of the globe, it can never be wise to vary our measures of security with the continually varying aspect of European affairs. A very obvious policy dictates to us a strenuous endeavour, as far as may be practicable, to place our safety out of the reach of the casualties, which may befall the contending parties, and the powers more immediately within their vortex. The way to effect this is to pursue a steady system, to organize all our *resources*, and put them in a state of preparation for prompt action. Regarding the overthrow of Europe at large as a matter not entirely chimerical, it will be our prudence to cultivate a spirit of self-dependence,

and to endeavour by unanimity, vigilance, and exertion, under the blessing of Providence, to hold the scales of our destiny in our own hands. Standing as it were in the midst of falling empires, it should be our aim to assume a station and attitude, which will preserve us from being overwhelmed in their ruins.

It has been very properly the policy of our government to cultivate peace. But, in contemplating the possibility of our being driven to unqualified war, it will be wise to anticipate, that frequently the most effectual way to defend is to attack. There may be imagined instances of very great moment to the permanent interests of this country, which would certainly require a disciplined force. To raise and prepare such a force will always be a work of considerable time, and it ought to be ready for the conjuncture whenever it shall arrive. Not to be ready then, may be to lose an opportunity, which it may be difficult afterwards to retrieve.

While a comprehensive view of external circumstances is believed to recommend perseverance in the precautions, which have been taken for the safety of the country, nothing has come to my knowledge in our interior situation, which leads to a different conclusion. The principal inquiry in this respect concerns the finances. The exhibition of their state from the department of the treasury, which you have transmitted, as I understand it, opposes no obstacle; nor have I been apprized, that any doubt is entertained by the officer, who presides in that department, of the sufficiency of our pecuniary resources. But on this point I cannot be expected to assume the responsibility of a positive opinion. It is the province of the Secretary of the Treasury to pronounce definitively, whether any insuperable impediment arises from this source.

The sound conclusion, viewing the subject in every light, is conceived to be, that no avoidable delay ought to be incurred in appointing the whole of the officers, and raising the whole of the men, provided for by the act which has been cited. If immediately entered upon, and pursued with the utmost activity, it cannot be relied upon, that the troops will be raised and disciplined in less than a year. What may not another year produce? Happy will it be for us, if we have so much time for preparation, and ill-judged indeed, if we do not make the most of it! The adequateness of the force to be raised, in relation to a serious invasion, is foreign to the present examination. But it is certain, that even a force of this extent, well instructed and well disciplined, would in such an event be of great utility and importance. Besides the direct effects of its own exertions, the militia rallying to it would derive, from its example and countenance, additional courage and perseverance. It would give a consistency and stability to our first efforts, of which they would otherwise be destitute; and would tend powerfully to prevent great, though perhaps partial calamities.

The Senate being in session, the officers to be appointed must of course be nominated to that body.

The pay of all who shall be appointed ought immediately to commence. They ought all to be employed without delay in different ways in the recruiting service; but, were it otherwise, there ought to be no suspension of their pay. The law annexes it as a matter of right. The attempt to apply a restriction by executive discretion might be dissatisfactory; and justice to the public does not seem to require it, because the acceptance of an office, which makes the person liable at pleasure to be called into actual service, will commonly from the moment of that accept-

ance interfere with any previous occupation, on which he may have depended. This observation cannot be applicable to myself, because I have taken a peculiar and distinct ground, to which it is my intention to adhere.

On the subject of your sixth question, the opinion is, that, under existing circumstances, it is not advisable to withdraw any of the troops from the quarter of the country, which you mention, towards the Atlantic frontier. But the disposition in those quarters probably requires careful revision. It is not impossible, that it will be found to admit of alterations favorable both to economy and to the military objects to be attained. The local knowledge of General Wilkinson would be so useful in an investigation of this sort, that it is deemed very important to direct him forthwith to repair to Philadelphia. If this be impracticable by land, he may, it is presumed, come by way of New Orleans. It is observed, that in his late communications with the governor he has taken pains to obviate jealousy of the views of the United States. This was prudent, and he ought to be encouraged to continue the policy. It will also be useful to employ a judicious engineer to survey our posts on the Lakes, in order that it may be ascertained, in the various relations of trade and defence, what beneficial changes, if any, can be made. In this examination Presque Isle and the southwestern extremity of Lake Erie will demand particular attention.

The reply to your seventh question is, that the companies directed to be added to the regiments of the old establishments ought, as soon as convenient, to reinforce the western army. It is probable, that, in the progress of events, they will be not less useful there than on the seaboard. Their destination in the first instance may be Pittsburg.

The following disposition of the artillery (the subject of your eighth question) is recommended. The two regiments by their establishment consist of twenty-eight companies. Of these nearly a battalion, in point of number, forms part of the western army. A complete battalion there will suffice. Let there be assigned to the fortifications at Boston one company, to those at New York two, to those at Newport two companies, to those at West Point one, to those at Mud Island two, to those at Baltimore one, to those at Norfolk two, to those on Cape Fear River one, to those at Charleston two, to those at Savannah one, to those at the mouth of the St. Mary's one. The remaining two battalions had best be reserved for the army in the field. During the winter they may retain the stations they now occupy. But, as soon as they can conveniently go into tents, it will be advisable to assemble them at some central or nearly central point, there to be put in a course of regular instruction, together with successive detachments of the officers and non-commissioned officers of the sea-board garrisons, until their services shall be actually required. The field-officers of course will be distributed proportionally, assigning to each the superintendence of a certain number of companies, and, as to those in garrison, of the posts at which they are stationed.

The permanent distribution of the troops, after they shall have been raised, which is understood to be an object of your ninth question, will probably be influenced by circumstances yet to be unfolded, and will best be referred to future consideration.

An arrangement for the recruiting service is the point of primary urgency. For this purpose each State should be divided into as many districts, as there are companies to be raised in it, and to every company

a particular district should be allotted, with one place of rendezvous in it, to which the recruits should be brought as fast as they are engaged. A certain number of these company districts, whenever it can be done, should be placed under the supervision of a field-officer. During the winter, in most of the States, it would be inconvenient to assemble in larger corps than companies. Great cities are to be avoided. The collection of troops there may lead to disorders, and expose, more than elsewhere, the morals and principles of the soldiery. But though it might now be premature to fix a permanent disposition of the troops, it may not be unuseful to indicate certain stations, where they may be assembled provisionally, and may probably be suffered to continue while matters remain in their present posture. The stations eligible in this view may be found for two regiments in the vicinity of Providence River, somewhere near Uxbridge; for two other regiments, in the vicinity of Brunswick, in New Jersey; for two other regiments, in the vicinity of the Potomac, near Harper's Ferry; for two other regiments, in the vicinity of Augusta, but above the falls of the Savannah. This disposition will unite considerations relative to the discipline and health of the troops, and to the economical supply of their wants by water. It will also have some military aspects, in the first instance, towards the security of Boston and Newport; in the second, towards that of New York and Philadelphia; in the third and fourth, towards that of Baltimore, Charleston, Savannah, and the southern States generally; and, in the third, particularly towards the reinforcement of the western army in certain events. But the military motives have only a qualified influence; since it is not doubted, that, in the prospect of a serious attack upon this country, the disposition of

the army ought to look emphatically to the southern region, as that which is by far the most likely to be the scene of action.

As to your tenth question, the opinion is, that the government itself ought to provide the rations. The plan of furnishing money to the recruits, as a substitute for this, is likely to be attended with several inconveniences. It will give them a pretence for absence injurious to discipline and order, and facilitating marauding and desertion. Many of the soldiery will be disposed to lay out too much of their money in ardent spirits, and too little in provisions, which, besides occasioning them to be ill, will lead to habits of intemperance.

The subject of your eleventh question is peculiarly important. The two modes have severally their advantages and disadvantages. That of purchases by agents of the government is liable to much mismanagement and abuse, sometimes from want of skill, but much oftener from infidelity. It is too frequently deficient in economy; but it is preferable, as it regards the quality of the articles to be supplied, the satisfaction of the troops, and the certainty of the supply, which last is a point of the utmost consequence to the success of any military operation. The mode by contract is sometimes found more economical; but, as the calculations of contractors have reference primarily to their own profit, they are apt to endeavour to impose on the troops articles of inferior quality. The troops, suspecting this, are apt to be dissatisfied even when there is no adequate cause, and when defects may admit of reasonable excuse. In the attention to cheapness of price, and other savings of expense, it from time to time happens, that the supplies are not laid in as early as the service requires, or not in suf-

ficient quantity, or are not conveyed with due celerity to the points where they are wanted. Circumstances like these tend to embarrass and even to defeat the best concerted military plans; which, in this mode, depend for their execution too much upon the combinations of individual avarice. It also occasionally happens, that the public, from the failures of the contractors, is under the necessity of interposing with sudden and extraordinary efforts to obviate the mischiefs and disappointments of those failures, producing, in addition to other evils, an accumulation of expense, which the fortunes of the delinquent contractors are insufficient to indemnify.

The union of the two modes will probably be found safest and best. Prudence always requires, that magazines shall be formed beforehand at stations relative to the probable or expected scene of action. These magazines may be laid in by contract, and the transportation of the supplies from the magazines, and the issuing of them to the army, may be the business of the military agents, who must be likewise authorized and enabled to provide for the deficiences of the contractors, and for whatever may not be comprehended in the contracts. This plan will to a great extent admit the competition of private interest to furnish the supplies at the cheapest rate. By narrowing the sphere of action of the public agents, it will proportionably diminish the opportunities of abuse, and it will unite, as far as is attainable, economy with the efficiency of military operations.

But, to obtain the full advantages of this plan, it is essential, that there shall be a man attached to the army, of distinguished capacity and integrity, to be charged with the superintendence of the department of supplies. To procure such a man, as military honor

can form no part of his reward, ample pecuniary compensation must be given; and he must be intrusted with large authority for the appointment of subordinate agents, accompanied with a correspondent responsibility. Proceeding on this ground, there would be a moral certainty of immense savings to the public in the business of supplies; savings, the magnitude of which will be easily understood by any man, who can estimate the vast difference in the results of extensive money transactions between a management at once skilful and faithful, and that which is either unskilful or unfaithful.

This suggestion contemplates as a part of the plan, that the procuring of supplies of every kind, which in our past experience has been divided between two departments, of quartermaster and commissary, shall be united under one head. This unity will tend to harmony, system, and vigor. It will avoid the discordant influence of civil with military functions. The quartermaster-general, in this case, instead of being a purveyor as formerly, will, besides the duties purely military of his station, be confined to the province of calling for the requisite supplies, and of seeing that they are duly furnished; in which he may be rendering a very useful check upon the purveyor.

The extent of your twelfth question has been matter of some doubt. But no inconvenience can ensue from answering it with greater latitude than may have been intended. It is conceived, that the strongest considerations of national policy and safety require, that we should be as fast as possible provided with arsenals and magazines of artillery, small arms, and the principal articles of military stores and camp equipage, equal to such a force as may be deemed sufficient to resist with effect the most serious invasion of

the most powerful European nation. This precaution, which prudence would at all times recommend, is peculiarly indicated by the existing crisis of Europe. The nature of the case does not furnish any absolute standard of the requisite force. It must be more or less a matter of judgment. The opinion is, that the calculation ought to be on the basis of fifty thousand men; that is, forty thousand infantry of the line, two thousand riflemen, four thousand horse, and four thousand artillerymen. And, with regard to such articles, as are expended by the use, not less than a full year's supply ought to be ready. This will allow due time from internal and external sources to continue the supply, in proportion to the exigencies which shall occur. As to clothing, since we may always on a sudden emergency find a considerable supply in our markets, and the articles are more perishable, the quantity in deposit may be much less than of other articles; but it ought not under present circumstances to be less than a year's supply for half the abovementioned force, especially of the woollen articles.

I proceed to the last of your questions, that which respects the stations for magazines. It is conceived, that three principal permanent stations will suffice, and that these ought to be Springfield and Harper's Ferry, which are already chosen, and the vicinity of Rocky Mount, on the Wateree, in South Carolina. These stations are in a great measure central to three great subdivisions of the United States; they are so interior as to be entirely safe, and yet on navigable waters, which empty into the ocean and facilitate a water conveyance to every point on our seacoast. They are also in well-settled and healthy districts of country. That near Harper's Ferry, it is well known, possesses extraordinary advantages for founderies and other

manufactories of iron. It is expected, that a canal will ere long effect a good navigation between the Wateree and the Catawba, which, whenever it shall happen, will render the vicinity of Rocky Mount extremely convenient to the supply of North Carolina by inland navigation. Pittsburg, West Point in New York, the neighbourhood of Trenton in New Jersey, and Fayetteville in North Carolina, may properly be selected as places of particular and occasional deposit. Large cities are as much as possible to be avoided.

The foregoing comprises, it is believed, a full answer to the questions you have stated. I shall in another letter offer to your consideration some further matters, which have occurred, and are deemed to be of importance to our military service. With respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Philadelphia, 13 December, 1798.

SIR,

I shall now present to your view the additional objects alluded to in my letter of this date.

A proper organization for the troops of the United States is a principal one. In proportion as the policy of the country is adverse to extensive military establishments, ought to be our care to render the principles of our military system as perfect as possible, and our endeavours to turn to the best account such force as we may at any time have on foot, and to provide an eligible standard for the augmentations to which particular emergencies may compel a resort.

The organization of our military force will, it is conceived, be much improved by modelling it on the following plan.

Let a regiment of infantry, composed as at present of two battalions, and each battalion of five companies, consist of these officers and men, namely, one colonel; two majors, a first and second; one adjutant, one quartermaster, and one paymaster, each of whom shall be a lieutenant; one surgeon and one surgeon's mate; ten captains; ten first and ten second lieutenants, besides the three lieutenants above mentioned; two cadets, with the pay and emoluments of sergeants; two sergeant-majors; two quartermaster-sergeants; two chief musicians, first and second, and twenty other musicians; forty sergeants; forty corporals; and nine hundred and twenty privates.

Let a regiment of dragoons consist of ten troops, making five squadrons, and, of these, officers and men, namely, one colonel; two majors, a first and second; one adjutant, one quartermaster, and one paymaster, each of whom shall be a lieutenant; one surgeon and one surgeon's mate; ten captains; ten first and ten second lieutenants, besides the three lieutenants above mentioned; five cadets, with the pay and emoluments of sergeants; two sergeant-majors; two quartermaster-sergeants; two chief musicians, first and second, and ten other musicians; forty sergeants; forty corporals; and nine hundred and twenty privates; the privates including, to each troop, one saddler, one blacksmith, and one boot-maker.

Let a regiment of artillery consist of four battalions, each battalion of four companies, and, of these, officers and men, namely, one colonel; four majors; one adjutant, one quartermaster, and one paymaster, each of whom shall be a lieutenant; one surgeon and two surgeon's mates; sixteen captains; sixteen first and sixteen second lieutenants, besides the three lieutenants above mentioned; thirty-two cadets, with the pay and

emoluments of sergeants; four sergeant-majors; four quartermaster-sergeants; sixty-four sergeants; sixty-four corporals; one chief musician and ten other musicians; eight hundred and ninety-six privates, including, to each company, eight artificers.

The principal reasons for this organization will be briefly suggested.

It will be observed, that the proportion of men to officers in the infantry and cavalry is considerably greater than by the present establishment. This presents, in the first place, the advantage of economy. By the proportional decrease of the officers, savings will result in their pay, subsistence, and the transportation of their baggage. The last circumstance, by lessening the impediments of an army, is also favorable to the celerity of its movements.

The command of each officer will become more respectable. This will be an inducement to respectable men to accept military appointments, and it will be an incentive to exertion among those, who shall be engaged, by upholding that justifiable pride, which is a necessary ingredient in the military spirit.

A company will then admit of an eligible subdivision into platoons, sections, and demi-sections, each of a proper front. Each battalion will then be of the size judged proper for a manœuvring column in the field, and it is that portion of an army, which, in the most approved system of tactics, is destined to fulfil this object. A battalion ought neither to be too unwieldy for rapid movements, nor so small as to multiply too much the subdivisions, and render each incapable either of a vigorous impulse or resistance.

The proportion of officers to men ought not to be greater than is adequate to the due management and command of them. A careful examination of this point

will satisfy every judge, that the number now proposed will be equal to both. This conclusion will be assisted by the idea, that our fundamental order, in conformity with that of the nations of Europe generally, ought to place our infantry in three ranks, to oppose to an enemy, who shall be in the same order, an equal mass for attack or defence.

These remarks explain summarily the chief reasons for the most material of the alterations suggested.

But it is not the intention to recommend a present augmentation of the number of rank and file to the proposed standard. It is only wished, that it may be adopted as that of the war establishment. The regiments, which have been authorized, may continue in this respect upon the footing already prescribed; leaving the actual augmentation to depend on events, which may create a necessity for the increase of our force. The other alterations recommended have relation rather to systematic propriety, than to very important military ends.

The term *lieutenant-colonel*, in our present establishment, has a relative signification, without any thing in fact to which it relates. It was introduced during our revolutionary war, to facilitate exchanges of prisoners; as our then enemy united the grade of colonel with that of general. But the permanent form of our military system ought to be regulated by principle, not by the changeable and arbitrary arrangement of a particular nation. The title of colonel, which has greater respectability, is more proper for the commander of a regiment, because it does not, like the other, imply a relation having no existence.

The term *ensign* is changed into that of lieutenant, as well because the latter from usage has additional respectability, offering an inducement to desirable

candidates, as because the former, in its origin, signified a standard-bearer, and supposed that each company had a distinct standard. This, in practice, has ceased to be the case, and for a variety of good reasons a standard of colors to each battalion of infantry is deemed sufficient. This standard is intended to be confided to a cadet, in whom it may be expected to excite emulation and exertion. The multiplication of grades, inconvenient with regard to exchanges, is thus avoided.

In the cavalry it is proper to allow a standard to each squadron, and hence it is proposed to have five cadets to a regiment.

The nature of the artillery service, constantly in detachment, renders it proper to compose a regiment of a greater number of battalions than the other corps. This our present establishment has recognised. But there is now a disorderly want of uniformity; one regiment being composed of four battalions, the other of three. The same organization ought to be common to all.

The diminution of the number of musicians, while it will save expense, is also warranted by the peculiar nature of the artillery service. They answer in this corps few of the purposes, which they fulfil in the infantry.

The existing laws contemplate, and with good reason, that the aids-de-camp of general officers, except the commander-in-chief and the officers in the department of inspection, shall be taken from the regiment. But they do not provide, that, when so taken, their places shall be supplied by others. It is conceived that this ought to be the case. The principles of the establishment suppose, for example, that three officers to a company of a given number are the just and due proportion. If, when an officer be taken from a com-

pany to fill one of the stations alluded to, his place be not filled by another, so that the number of officers to a company may remain the same, it must follow that the company will be deficient in officers. It is true, that the number of a company is continually diminishing, but it diminishes in officers as well as men; and it is not known that the proportion is varied. Practice in every institution ought to conform to principle, or there will result more or less of disorder. An army is in many respects a machine; of which the displacement of any of the organs, if permitted to continue, injures its symmetry and energy, and leads to disorder and weakness. The increase of the number of rank and file, while it strengthens the reasons for replacing the officers, who may be removed, will more than compensate in point of economy for the addition of officers by the substitution. This may be reduced to the test of calculation. But, though the place of an officer in his regiment ought to be supplied upon any such removal, he ought not to lose his station in the regiment, but ought to rank and rise as if he had continued to serve in it.

The provision, that the aids-de-camp and the officers of inspection shall be drawn from the line of the army, is not restricted as to grade. There ought to be such a restriction. The aids of major-generals ought not to be taken from a rank superior to that of captain, nor those of brigadiers from a rank superior to that of first lieutenant. The inspectors ought in like manner to be limited, those of brigadiers to the rank of captain, those of divisions to that of major. This will guard against the multiplication of superior grades by removals to fill such stations.

The judicious establishment of general rules of promotion, liable to exceptions in favor of extraordinary

service or merit, is a point of the greatest consequence. It is conceived, that these rules are the most convenient that can be devised; namely, that all officers shall rise in the regiments to which they respectively belong up to the rank of major inclusively; that afterwards they shall rise in the line of the army at large, with the limitation, however, that the officers of artillery, cavalry, and infantry shall be confined to their respective corps until they shall attain the rank of colonel.

It is very material to the due course of military service, that the several classes of an army shall be distinguished from each other by certain known badges, and that there shall be uniformity in dress and equipment subject to these distinctions. The dress itself will indeed constitute a part of them. It is of inferior moment, what they shall be, provided they are conspicuous, economical, and not inconsistent with good appearance, which in an army is far from being a matter of indifference. The following uniforms and badges are recommended; but, if any of them are supposed liable to exception, they may be changed at pleasure.

The uniform of the commander-in-chief to be a blue coat, with yellow buttons and gold epaulets (each having three silver stars), with linings, cape, and cuffs of buff; in winter, buff vest and breeches of nankeen. The coat to be without lapels, and embroidered on the cape, cuffs, and pockets. A white plume in the hat to be a further distinction. The adjutant-general, the aids, and secretaries of the commander-in-chief to be likewise distinguished by a white plume.

The uniform of the other general officers to be a blue coat with yellow buttons, gold epaulets, the lining and facings of buff; the under clothes the same as

those of the commander-in-chief. The major-generals to be distinguished by two silver stars on each epaulet, and, except the inspector-general, by a black and white plume, the black below. The brigadiers to be distinguished by one silver star on each epaulet, and by a red and white plume, the red below. The aids of all general officers, who are taken from regiments, and the officers of inspection, to wear the uniforms of the regiments from which they are taken. The aids to be severally distinguished by the like plumes, which are worn by the general officers to whom they are respectively attached.

The uniform of the aids and secretaries of the commander-in-chief, when not taken from regiments, to be a blue coat with yellow buttons and gold epaulets, buff lining and facings; the same under clothes as the commander-in-chief.

The inspector-general, his aids, and the officers of inspection generally, to be distinguished by a blue plume. The quartermaster-general and other military officers in his department to be distinguished by a green plume.

The uniform of the infantry and artillery to be a blue coat, with white buttons and red facings, white under clothes, and cocked hats. The coats of the infantry to be lined with white; of the artillery, with red.

The uniform of the cavalry to be a green coat, with white buttons, lining, and facings; white vest and breeches; with helmet caps.

Each colonel to be distinguished by two epaulets, each major by one epaulet on the right shoulder, and a strap on the left. All the field-officers, except as above, and the regimental staff, to wear red plumes.

Captains to be distinguished by an epaulet on the

right shoulder. Lieutenants by one on the left shoulder. Cadets by a strap on the right shoulder. The epaulets and straps of the regimental officers to be of silver.

Sergeant-majors and quartermaster-sergeants to be distinguished by two red worsted epaulets. Sergeants by a like epaulet on the right shoulder. The flank companies to be distinguished by red wings on the shoulders.

The coats of the musicians to be of the color of the facings of the corps to which they severally belong. The chief musicians to wear two white worsted epaulets.

All the civil staff of the army to wear plain blue coats, with yellow buttons and white under clothes. No gold or silver lace, except in the epaulets and straps, to be worn.

The commissioned officers and cadets to wear swords.

All persons belonging to the army to wear a black cockade, with a small white eagle in the centre. The cockade of the non-commissioned officers, musicians, and privates to be of leather, with eagles of tin.

The regiments to be distinguished from each other numerically. The number of each regiment to be expressed on the buttons.

It cannot fail to happen, that clothing made at a distance from the army will in numerous instances be ill fitted to the persons to whom it is issued. This is an inconvenience, as it respects appearance, comfort, and use. It merits consideration, whether it may not be remedied by making provision by law for the necessary alterations at the cost of the soldiery. As there are always to be found tailors in an army, the alterations may be made there during seasons of in-

activity; and moderate compensations may be established, to be deducted out of the pay. The tailors, when so employed, being exempted from military duty, will be satisfied with very small allowances; and the soldiers will probably prefer this expense to the inconvenience of wearing clothes, which do not fit them.

On this subject of clothing, it is remarked with regret, that the returns, which have been received, exhibit none on hand; though from verbal communications it is understood, that measures are in train for obtaining a present supply. It is desirable that some more effectual plan, than has hitherto been pursued, should be adopted to procure regular and sufficient supplies on reasonable terms. While we depend on foreigners, will it not be advisable to import the materials rather than take the chance of markets? And will it not be expedient, with a view to economy, to have the clothing made up in the countries from which it may be brought? The matter certainly deserves serious attention. Our supply in the mode hitherto practised is not only very precarious, but must doubtless be obtained at a very dear rate.

Another point, no less deserving of particular attention, is the composition of the ration of provisions. It was on the last session augmented beyond all former example. It is not recollected, that the ration, which was allowed during the war with Great Britain, was found insufficient by troops once formed to military habits, and acquainted with the best methods of managing their provisions. The present ration, estimating by price, is understood to be greater than the ration in that war by at least forty per cent. This is evidently a very important augmentation. Various disadvantages attend it; a great increase of expense; additional difficulty in furnishing under all circumstances

the stipulated allowance, consequently a multiplication of the possible causes of discontent, murmur, and perhaps even mutiny; the necessity of a greater number of wagons for transportation, and of course the extension of this always serious source of embarrassment to military operations.

The quantity of spirituous liquors, which is a component part of the ration, is so large as to endanger, where they might not before exist, habits of intemperance, alike fatal to health and discipline. Experience has repeatedly shown, that many soldiers will exchange their rum for other articles; which is productive of the double mischief of subjecting those, with whom the exchange is made, to the loss of what is far more necessary, and to all the consequences of brutal intoxication. The step having been once taken, a change is delicate; but it is believed to be indispensable, and that the temporary evils of a change can bear no proportion to the permanent and immense evils of a continuance of the error.

It may not perhaps be advisable to bring back the ration to the standard of the late war, but to modify it in some respects differently, so as not materially to affect the aggregate expense. It may consist of eighteen ounces of bread or flour, one pound and a quarter of fresh beef, or one pound of salted beef, or three quarters of a pound of salted pork; salt, when fresh meat is issued, at the rate of one quart, and candles at the rate of a pound, for every hundred rations. With regard to liquor, it may be best to exclude it from being a component part of the ration; allowing a discretion to commanding officers to cause it to be issued in quantities not exceeding half a gill per day, except on extraordinary occasions. Vinegar also ought to be furnished, when to be had, at the rate of two

quarts, and soap at the rate of two pounds, per hundred rations.

There are often difficulties in furnishing articles of this description, and the equivalent in money is frequently pernicious, rather than beneficial. Where there is a contract, the promise of such articles is apt to prove more beneficial to the contractor than to any other person. He commonly so manages it, that the substitute is not a real equivalent. But it need not be observed, that whatever is to be done in this respect must be so conducted, as not to infract the conditions on which the troops now in service were enlisted.

It is deeply to be lamented, that a very precious period of leisure was not improved towards forming among ourselves engineers and artillerists; and that, owing to this neglect, we are in danger of being overtaken by war, without competent characters of these descriptions. To form them suddenly is impossible. Much previous study and experiment are essential. If possible to avoid it, a war ought not to find us wholly unprovided. It is conceived to be advisable to endeavour to introduce from abroad at least one distinguished engineer, and one distinguished officer of artillery. They may be sought for preferably in the Austrian, and next in the Prussian armies. The grade of colonel, with adequate pecuniary compensation, may attract officers of a rank inferior to that grade in those armies, who will be of distinguished ability and merit. But in this, as we know from past experience, nothing is more easy than to be imposed upon, nothing more difficult than to avoid imposition, and that therefore it is requisite to commit the business of procuring such characters to some very judicious hand, under every caution that can put him upon his guard.

If there shall be occasion for the actual employment of military force, a corps of riflemen will be for several purposes extremely useful. The eligible proportion of riflemen to infantry of the line may be taken at a twentieth. Hence in the apportionment of an army of fifty thousand men, in my letter of this date, two thousand riflemen are included, and, in the estimate of arms to be provided, two thousand rifles. There is a kind of rifle commonly called *Ferguson's*, which will deserve particular attention. It is understood that it has in different European armies supplanted the old rifle, as being more quickly loaded and more easily kept clean. If the shot of it be equally sure, or nearly so, those advantages entitle it to a preference. It is very desirable, that this point, and its comparative merit in other respects, be ascertained by careful examination and experiment.

Perhaps generally, but more certainly when the troops shall serve in southern climates, flannel shirts will be most conducive to health. Will it not be advisable to make provision for retaining a discretion in such cases; either to allow a less number of flannel shirts equivalent to the present allowance of linen, or, if this cannot be, to furnish the soldiery with the requisite number, deducting the difference of cost out of their pay?

The only provision for the appointment of a quarter-master-general is to be found in the act of the 28th of May, authorizing the President to raise a provisional army, which limits his rank and emoluments to those of lieutenant-colonel. This provision is conceived to be entirely inadequate. The military duties of the office are of a nature to render it of the first importance in an army; demanding great abilities and a character every way worthy of trust. Accordingly it

is the general practice, founded upon very substantial reasons, to confide it to an officer of high military rank. The probability is, that, without a similar arrangement on our part, we shall not be able to command a fit character; and in taking one of inferior pretensions we shall subject the service to disadvantages, out of all proportion to any objections which may be supposed to militate against the conferring of such rank. It is feared, that an appointment under the existing provision would only create embarrassment, should there be real necessity for military exertions; and that the alternative must be either to leave the army destitute of so necessary an organ, or to give it one likely in the progress of things to prove unequal to the task.

It was much desired, for preventing future controversy, to fix in the first instance the relative grades of the regimental officers. That of the field-officers has been rendered impossible, without injustice and the hazard of much dissatisfaction, by the impossibility of completing the arrangement in Connecticut and the three most southern States. But, upon close examination, many obstacles opposed a definitive establishment of the relative rank, even of the officers of companies, in the regiments which have been organized. Numerous circumstances, which ought to influence the decision, are unknown; and without this knowledge a final arrangement might lead to very awkward and perplexing results. In consideration of this difficulty, no more than a temporary one, liable to future revision, has been adopted. It will be necessary to attend to this in the appointments, and to signify to the persons, that they are to obey according to the order of nomination; but that the President reserves to himself the right, where cogent reasons for it shall appear, to

change the relative rank which that order may seem to recognise. He will judge whether, in making the nomination to the Senate, a like reserve is necessary.

I am well aware, that several of the matters suggested in this letter will require legislative provision. If the whole or any of them shall be approved by the executive, no time ought to be lost in recommending them to the consideration of Congress. As to some of them, it is very desirable that the necessary provision by law should precede the enlistment of the men, to avoid the obstacle to a change, which may result from contract. With great respect and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Susquehanna, 16 December, 1798.

SIR,

Being detained on the east bank of this river by northwesterly winds, and consequent low tides, I shall devote some of the moments of my detention in writing to you on an important subject.

In a conversation had with you in Philadelphia, you conveyed the very just opinion, that, for the proper and successful direction of our military affairs, it was essential that it should be, as far as possible, concentrated in one or a few principal officers, with whom alone the head of the war department should communicate. Any other plan would doubtless contravene ideas of military propriety, and would involve you in an impracticable detail, producing necessarily confusion and imbecility in the system. You seemed also desirous, that I should express to you some ideas of the proper arrangement. Close application to other

matters, with which you charged me whilst I was in Philadelphia, and my extreme impatience, on account of the season and weather, to leave that place must be my apology for not doing this sooner.

You know the ground, Sir, on which I accepted the command of the army; and that it was a part of my plan to decline the occupations of the office until my presence in the field should be required for actual operations, or other imperious circumstances might require my assistance. Persevering in this plan, I cannot undertake to assume a direct agency incompatible therewith; and a half-way acting might be more inconvenient than totally declining it. The other general officers will, I am persuaded, execute with alacrity any service to which they may be destined. In this assurance I take the liberty to advise you to adopt the following plan.

Let the charge and direction of our military affairs in the three most southern States be intrusted to General Pinckney. If, indeed, it will not derange him too much to take immediately a more northerly position, and more convenient for the purpose, let Virginia be added, and his position be in it; leaving South Carolina and Georgia to the care of Brigadier-General Washington, subject to the orders of the former; through whom all the military concerns of the States should pass to the war office. General Hamilton may be charged with superintending, under your direction, all the troops and posts which shall not be confided to General Pinckney, including the army under General Wilkinson. His proximity to the seat of government will render this not inconvenient. The official letters of the commander of the western army may pass open through your hands, to enable you to give immediate orders in cases, which may be too urgent to wait for the agency of General Hamilton.

The companies to be recruited, according to the plan laid before me, in the States of Kentucky and Tennessee, should be subjected to the direction of Major-General Pinckney, because they compose a part of the regiments, which are to be raised in the three southern States; but the present force in Tennessee must be excluded therefrom, otherwise an interference with the command of Brigadier Wilkinson, and the mode of his communication with the department of war, would follow, and confusion result from it.

It will be useful, that the whole of the recruiting service should be under one direction, and this properly appertains to the office of the inspector-general. He will, of course, be authorized to call to his aid the other general officers.

On this plan, there will be two principal organs through whom all our military affairs will be transacted with your department. This will serve to unite and simplify the objects of your attention, and will enable you to devote it principally to the considering and maturing of general plans, and to an effectual superintendence of their execution on a large scale.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GENERAL LAFAYETTE.

Mount Vernon, 25 December, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

Convinced as you must be of the fact, it would be a mere waste of time to assure you of the sincere and heartfelt pleasure I derived from finding by your letters, that you had not only regained your liberty, but were in the enjoyment of better health, than could have been expected from your long and rigorous confine-

ment, and that Madame de Lafayette and the young ladies were able to survive it at all. On these desirable events I can add with truth, that, amongst your numerous friends, none can offer his congratulations with more warmth, or pray more sincerely for the perfect restoration of your lady's health, than I do.

It is equally unnecessary for me to apologize to you for my long silence, when by a recurrence to your own letters you will find my excuse; for by these it will appear, that, if you had embarked for this country at the times mentioned therein, no letters of mine could have arrived in Europe before your departure. By your favor of the 20th of August I was informed, that your voyage to America was postponed, for the reasons there given; which conveyed the first idea to my mind, that a letter from me might find you in Europe.

The letter last mentioned, together with that of the 5th of September, found me in Philadelphia, whither I had gone for the purpose of making some military arrangements with the Secretary of War, and where every moment of my time was so much occupied in that business, as to allow no leisure to attend to any thing else.

I have been thus circumstantial, in order to impress you with the true cause of my silence, and to satisfy your mind, if a doubt had arisen there, that my friendship for you had undergone no diminution or change; and that no one in the United States would receive you with more open arms or ardent affection than I should, after the differences between this country and France are adjusted, and harmony between the nations is again restored. But it would be uncandid and incompatible with the friendship I have always professed for you, to say (and on your own account), that I wish

it before. For you may be assured, my dear Sir, that the scenes you would meet with, and the part you would be stimulated to act, in case of an open rupture, or even if matters should remain *in statu quo*, would be such as to place you in a situation, in which no address or human prudence could free you from embarrassment. In a word, you would lose the confidence of one party or the other, perhaps of both, were you here under these circumstances.

To give you a complete view of the politics and situation of things in this country would far exceed the limits of a letter, and to trace effects to their causes would be a work of time. But the sum of them may be given in a few words, and it amounts to this. That a party exists in the United States, formed by a combination of causes, which oppose the government in all its measures, and are determined, as all their conduct evinces, by clogging its wheels indirectly to change the nature of it, and to subvert the constitution. To effect this, no means which have a tendency to accomplish their purposes are left unessayed. The friends of government, who are anxious to maintain its neutrality, and to preserve the country in peace, and adopt measures to secure these objects, are charged by them as being monarchists, aristocrats, and infractors of the constitution, which, according to their interpretation of it, would be a mere cipher. They arrogated to themselves (until the eyes of the people began to discover how outrageously they had been treated in their commercial concerns by the Directory of France, and that that was a ground on which they could no longer tread,) the sole merit of being the friends of France, when in fact they had no more regard for that nation than for the Grand Turk, further than their own views were promoted by it;

denouncing those who differed in opinion, (whose principles are purely American, and whose sole view was to observe a strict neutrality,) as acting under British influence, and being directed by her counsels, or as being her pensioners.

This is but a short sketch of what requires much time to illustrate; and is given with no other view, than to show you what would be your situation here at this crisis under such circumstances as it unfolds.

You have expressed a wish, worthy of the benevolence of your heart, that I would exert all my endeavours to avert the calamitous effects of a rupture between our countries. Believe me, my dear friend, that no man can deprecate an event of this sort with more horror than I should, and that no one, during the whole of my administration, labored more incessantly, and with more sincerity and zeal, than I did, to avoid this, and to render all justice, nay favor, to France, consistent with the neutrality, which had been proclaimed, sanctioned by Congress, approved by the State legislatures, and by the people at large in their town and county meetings. But neutrality was not the point at which France was aiming; for, whilst they were crying *Peace, Peace*, and pretending that they did not wish us to be embroiled in their quarrel with Great Britain, they were pursuing measures in *this country* so repugnant to its sovereignty, and so incompatible with every principle of neutrality, as must inevitably have produced a war with the latter. And when they found, that the government here was resolved to adhere steadily to its plan of neutrality, their next step was to destroy the confidence of the people in it and to separate them from it; for which purpose their diplomatic agents were specially instructed, and in the attempt were aided by inimical characters among

ourselves, not, as I observed before, because they loved France more than any other nation, but because it was an instrument to facilitate the destruction of their own government.

Hence proceeded those charges, which I have already enumerated, against the friends to peace and order. No doubt remains on this side of the water, that to the representations of, and encouragement given by, these people is to be ascribed, in a great measure, the infractions of our treaty with France; her violation of the laws of nations, disregard of justice, and even of sound policy. But herein they have not only deceived France, but were deceived themselves, as the event has proved; for, no sooner did the yeomanry of this country come to a right understanding of the nature of the dispute, than they rose as one man with a tender of their services, their lives, and their fortunes to support the government of their choice, and to defend their country. This has produced a declaration from them (how sincere let others judge), that, if the French should attempt to invade this country, they themselves would be amongst the foremost to repel the attack.

You add in another place, that the Executive Directory are disposed to an accommodation of all differences. If they are sincere in this declaration, let them evidence it by actions; for words unaccompanied therewith will not be much regarded now. I would pledge myself, that the government and people of the United States will meet them heart and hand at a fair negotiation; having no wish more ardent, than to live in peace with all the world, provided they are suffered to remain undisturbed in their just rights. Of this, their patience, forbearance, and repeated solicitations under accumulated injuries and insults, are incontesta-

ble proofs; but it is not to be inferred from hence, that they will suffer any nation under the sun, while they retain a proper sense of virtue and independence, to trample upon their rights with impunity, or to direct or influence the internal concerns of their country.

It has been the policy of France, and that of the opposition party among ourselves, to inculcate a belief that all those, who have exerted themselves to keep this country in peace, did it from an overweening attachment to Great Britain. But it is a solemn truth, and you may count upon it, that it is void of foundation, and propagated for no other purpose, than to excite popular clamor against those, whose aim was peace, and whom they wished out of their way.

That there are many among us, who wish to see this country embroiled on the side of Great Britain, and others, who are anxious that we should take part with France against her, admits of no doubt. But it is a fact, on which you may entirely rely, that the governing powers of the country and a large part of the people are truly Americans in principle, attached to the interest of it, and unwilling under any circumstances whatsoever to participate in the politics or contests of Europe; much less, since they have found that France, having forsaken the ground first taken, is interfering in the internal concerns of all nations, neutral as well as belligerent, and setting the world in an uproar.

After my Valedictory Address to the people of the United States, you would no doubt be somewhat surprised to hear, that I had again consented to gird on the sword. But, having struggled eight or nine years against the invasion of our rights by one power, and to establish our independence of it, I could not remain an unconcerned spectator of the attempt of another

power to accomplish the same object, though in a different way, with less pretensions; indeed, without any at all.

On the politics of Europe I shall express no opinion, nor make any inquiry who is right or who is wrong. I wish well to all nations and to all men. My politics are plain and simple. I think every nation has a right to establish that form of government, under which it conceives it may live most happy; provided it infracts no right, or is not dangerous to others; and that no governments ought to interfere with the internal concerns of another, except for the security of what is due to themselves.

I sincerely hope, that Madame de Lafayette will accomplish all her wishes in France, and return safe to you with renovated health. I congratulate you on the marriage of your eldest daughter, and beg to be presented to her and her sister Virginia; to the latter in the most respectful and affectionate terms. To George I have written. In all these things Mrs. Washington, as the rest of the family would do were they at home, most cordially joins me; as she does in wishing you and them every felicity, which this life can afford, as some consolation for your long, cruel, and painful confinement and sufferings.

I shall now only add, what you knew well before that, with the most sincere friendship and affectionate regard, I am always yours, &c.

TO WILLIAM VANS MURRAY.*

Mount Vernon, 26 December, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Having some cause to believe the vessel was captured, in which went the original of the enclosed copy, I forward a duplicate.

I returned a few days ago from Philadelphia, whither I had been for the purpose of making military arrangements with the Secretary of War, respecting the force which is about to be raised. It was there I received a letter from Mr. Dandridge, announcing his intention of returning to America, partly on account of his health, expressing in lively and grateful terms his sense of your attentions and kind treatment; and adding, that, as experience had more and more convinced him that a sedentary life was incompatible both with his health and turn of mind (a sentiment he had often expressed whilst he lived with me), he wished for an appointment in the army we were about to raise. The application arriving opportunely, he stands arranged as captain of a company of infantry in one of the regiments, which will be raised in Virginia; and it is necessary he should enter upon the duties thereof as soon as it can be made convenient.

Mr. Envoy Logan, who arrived at Philadelphia about the time I did, brings very *flattering* accounts of the disposition of the French Directory *towards this country*. He has dined with one, supped with another, and in short has been as familiar with all, that were in place, as the hand is with its glove; and he is not a little employed in propagating this doctrine in all parts of the United States by means of the presses, which

* Minister Resident from the United States in Holland.

are at the command of that party. He says the inclinations of France to be upon good terms with the United States are *now* so strong, that it must be our own mismanagement and disinclination to peace, if matters with that country are not accommodated upon terms honorable and advantageous to this.*

Both houses of Congress were formed before I left

* The mission of Dr. Logan, under the auspices, as it was supposed, of Mr. Jefferson, was a fertile topic of conjecture and discussion in the party politics of the day. While General Washington was in Philadelphia, concerting with the major-generals and Secretary of War the arrangements of the army, Dr. Logan called on him. The following *Memorandum* of the interview, written down by General Washington at the time, is perhaps more curious as exhibiting a trait of his character, than important for the historical matter it contains.

"*Tuesday, November 13th*, 1798.—Mr. Lear, my secretary, being from our lodgings on business, one of my servants came into the room where I was writing, and informed me that a gentleman in the parlour below desired to see me; no name was sent up. In a few minutes I went down, and found the Rev. Dr. Blackwell and Dr. Logan there. I advanced towards and gave my hand to the former; the latter did the same towards me. I was backward in giving mine. He possibly supposing from hence, that I did not recollect him, said his name was Logan. Finally, in a very cool manner, and with an air of marked indifference, I gave him my hand, and asked *Dr. Blackwell to be seated*; the other *took* a seat at the same time. I addressed *all* my conversation to Dr. Blackwell; the other *all* his to me, to which I only gave negative or affirmative answers, as laconically as I could, except asking how Mrs. Logan did. He seemed disposed to be very polite, and, while Dr. Blackwell and myself were conversing on the late calamitous fever, offered me an asylum at his house, if it should return, or I thought myself in any danger in the city, and two or three rooms by way of accommodation. I thanked him slightly, observing there would be no call for it.

"About this time Dr. Blackwell took his leave. We all rose from our seats, and I moved a few paces towards the door of the room, expecting the other would follow, and take his leave also. Instead of which, he kept his ground, and proceeded to inform me more particularly (for he had mentioned it before), that he had seen General Lafayette at Hamburg, and his lady and daughter (I think in France), and related many things concerning them. He said something also respecting an interview he had had with our minister, Mr. Murray, in Holland; but, as I remained standing, and showed the utmost inattention to what

Philadelphia, but had not been long enough in session for an opinion of the result to be prognosticated.

The family join me in presenting Mrs. Murray and yourself with the compliments of the season, and in wishing you many happy returns of them.

With very sincere esteem, I am, &c.

---

he was saying, I do not now recollect what the purport of it was; except that he hurried from thence to Paris, his object being, he said, to get there before the departure of our *commissioners*, as he called them.

"He observed that the situation of our affairs in this country, and the train they were in with respect to France, had induced him to make the voyage in hope, or expectation, or words to that effect, of contributing to their amelioration. This drew my attention more pointedly to what he was saying, and induced me to remark, that there was something very singular in this; that *he*, who could only be viewed as a private character, unarmed with proper powers, and presumptively unknown in France, should suppose he could effect what three gentlemen of the first respectability in our country, specially charged under the authority of the government, were unable to do. With this observation he seemed a little confounded, but, recovering, said, that not more than five persons had any knowledge of his going; that he was furnished by Mr. Jefferson and Mr. M'Kean with certificates of his citizenship; and that M. Merlin, President of the Directory of France, had discovered the greatest desire that France and America should be on the best terms. I answered, that *he* was more fortunate than our envoys, for they could neither be received nor heard by M. Merlin or the Directory; that if the powers of France were serious in their professions, there was a plain and effectual way by which that object could be accomplished, namely, to repeal all the obnoxious *arrêts*, by which the commerce and rights of this country had been invaded, put an end to further depredations on both, and make restitution for the injuries we had received. A conduct like this, I said, would speak more forcibly than words; for the latter never made an impression on my mind, when they were contradicted by actions.

"He said that the Directory was apprehensive, that this country, the government of it, or our envoys, I am not now sure which he meant or alluded to, was not well disposed towards France. I asked what better evidence could be given in refutation of this opinion, than its long-suffering of the outrageous conduct of that nation towards the United States, and despatching three gentlemen of unquestionable worth, with ample powers to reconcile all differences even at the expense of great sacrifices on our part; and asked him if the Directory looked upon us as worms, not even allowed to turn when trod upon; for it was evident to all the world, that we had borne, and forborne, beyond what even

TO BUSHROD WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 31 December, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

It gave me pleasure to hear from Judge Cushing, that you had returned from your southern circuit in good health. I presume you will soon have to undertake another journey, when I shall hope to see you.*

I was not unmindful of your application in behalf of Captain Blackburn; but, when the list of applicants came to be unfolded, it was found, that there were so many requests of a similar nature from officers of the existing corps, that it was impossible to comply with them, and difficult to discriminate, for which reasons it was deemed best to reject them *in toto*; especially as in the raising of new corps it rarely happens, that officers are drawn from the old, and nothing but length of service, or very distinguished merit, or powerful interest or influence, gives birth to the measure.

---

common respect for ourselves permitted. He replied, that they had taken off the embargo, and were making restitution of property, mentioning one instance, I think. With respect to the embargo, I observed, that taking it off, or continuing it on, was a matter of no great importance, if, as I had been informed, our vessels in French ports were few. He said that the attempt at a coalition of European powers against France would come to nothing; that the Directory were under no apprehensions on that ground; and that Great Britain would have to contend alone; insinuating, as I conceived his object at the time to be, that we should be involved in a dangerous situation, if we persisted in our hostile appearances. To this I finally replied, that we were driven to those measures in self-defence, and I hoped the spirit of this country would never suffer itself to be injured with impunity by any nation under the sun. To this, he said *he told Citizen Merlin*, that, if the United States were invaded by France, they would unite to a man to oppose the invaders."

* Bushrod Washington was appointed one of the Associate Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States on the 20th of December, and his journey to Philadelphia for the purpose of joining the court is here doubtless alluded to.

By this conveyance I have sent to General Marshall the charge of Judge Addison to the grand juries of the county courts of the Fifth Circuit of the State of Pennsylvania, and requested him, after he had read it, to give it to you, or dispose of it in any other manner he might think proper. This charge is on the liberty of speech and of the press, and is a justification of the sedition and alien laws.

But I do not believe, that any thing contained in it, in Evans's pamphlet, or in any other writing, will produce the least change in the conduct of the leaders of opposition to the measures of the general government. They have points to carry, from which no reasoning, no inconsistency of conduct, no absurdity, can divert them. If, however, such writings should produce conviction in the minds of those, who have hitherto placed faith in their assertions, it will be a fortunate event for this country.

Has any thing been done, and what, with my correspondent Mr. Langhorne? I have heard since my return from Philadelphia, that there has been some stirring matter, but of the result I am ignorant. The family here present the compliments of the season to you and Mrs. Washington. I remain your sincere friend, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY.

Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 15 January, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

At the threshold of this letter I ought to make an apology for its contents; but, if you will give me credit

for my motives, I will contend for no more, however erroneous my sentiments may appear to you.

It would be a waste of time to attempt to bring to the view of a person of your observation and discernment, the endeavours of a certain party among us to disquiet the public mind with unfounded alarms; to arraign every act of the administration; to set the people at variance with their government; and to embarrass all its measures. Equally useless would it be to predict what must be the inevitable consequences of such a policy, if it cannot be arrested.

Unfortunately, and extremely do I regret it, the State of Virginia has taken the lead in this opposition. I have said the *State*, because the conduct of its legislature in the eyes of the world will authorize the expression, and because it is an incontrovertible fact, that the principal leaders of the opposition dwell in it, and that, with the help of the chiefs in other States, all the plans are arranged and systematically pursued by their followers in other parts of the Union; though in no State except Kentucky, that I have heard of, has legislative countenance been obtained beyond Virginia.

It has been said, that the great mass of the citizens of this State are well-affected, notwithstanding, to the general government and the Union; and I am willing to believe it, nay, do believe it; but how is this to be reconciled with their suffrages at the elections of representatives, both to Congress and their State legislature, who are men opposed to the former, and by the tendency of their measures would destroy the latter? Some among us have endeavoured to account for this inconsistency, and, though convinced themselves of its truth, they are unable to convince others, who are unacquainted with the internal policy of the State.

One of the reasons assigned is, that the most respectable and best qualified characters among us will not come forward. Easy and happy in their circumstances at home, and believing themselves secure in their liberties and property, they will not forsake their occupations, and engage in the turmoil of public business, or expose themselves to the calumnies of their opponents, whose weapons are detraction.

But, at such a crisis as this, when every thing dear and valuable to us is assailed; when this party hangs upon the wheels of government as a dead weight, opposing every measure that is calculated for defence and self-preservation, abetting the nefarious views of another nation upon our rights, preferring, as long as they dare contend openly against the spirit and resentment of the people, the interest of France to the welfare of their own country, justifying the former at the expense of the latter; when every act of their own government is tortured, by constructions they will not bear, into attempts to infringe and trample upon the constitution with a view to introduce monarchy; when the most unceasing and the purest exertions, which were making to maintain a neutrality, proclaimed by the executive, approved unequivocally by Congress, by the State legislatures, nay, by the people themselves in various meetings, and to preserve the country in peace, are charged with being measures calculated to favor Great Britain at the expense of France, and all those, who had any agency in it are accused of being under the influence of the former and her pensioners; when measures are systematically and pertinaciously pursued, which must eventually dissolve the Union or produce coercion; I say, when these things have become so obvious, ought characters who are best able to rescue their country from the pending evil to remain at home?

Rather ought they not to come forward, and by their talents and influence stand in the breach, which such conduct has made on the peace and happiness of this country, and oppose the widening of it?

Vain will it be to look for peace and happiness, or for the security of liberty or property, if civil discord should ensue. And what else can result from the policy of those among us, who, by all the measures in their power, are driving matters to extremity, if they cannot be counteracted effectually? The views of men can only be known, or guessed at, by their words or actions. Can those of the *leaders* of opposition be mistaken, then, if judged by this rule? That they are followed by numbers, who are unacquainted with their designs, and suspect as little the tendency of their principles, I am fully persuaded. But, if their conduct is viewed with indifference, if there are activity and misrepresentation on one side, and supineness on the other, their numbers accumulated by intriguing and discontented foreigners under proscription, who were at war with their own governments, and the greater part of them with *all* governments, they will increase, and nothing short of Omniscience can foretell the consequences.

I come now, my good Sir, to the object of my letter, which is, to express a hope and an earnest wish, that you will come forward at the ensuing elections (if not for Congress, which you may think would take you too long from home,) as a candidate for representative in the General Assembly of this commonwealth.

There are, I have no doubt, very many sensible men, who oppose themselves to the torrent, that carries away others who had rather swim with than stem it without an able pilot to conduct them; but these are neither old in legislation, nor well known in the

community. Your weight of character and influence in the House of Representatives would be a bulwark against such dangerous sentiments, as are delivered there at present. It would be a rallying-point for the timid, and an attraction of the wavering. In a word, I conceive it to be of immense importance at this crisis, that you should be there; and I would fain hope, that all minor considerations will be made to yield to the measure.

If I have erroneously supposed, that your sentiments on these subjects are in unison with mine, or if I have assumed a liberty, which the occasion does not warrant, I must conclude as I began, with praying that my motives may be received as an apology. My fear, that the tranquillity of the Union, and of this State in particular, is hastening to an awful crisis, has extorted them from me.

With great and very sincere regard and respect, I am, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.*

TO JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Mount Vernon, 20 January, 1799.

SIR,

I have been honored with a letter from you, dated at Berlin on the 29th of October last; covering one

---

* No answer to this letter has been found. The political sentiments of Patrick Henry at this time, however, may be understood from his letter to Mr. Blair, contained in the APPENDIX, No. XVIII.

How far the above arguments and representations influenced him is not known; but he presented himself at the next election as a candidate for the House of Representatives, and, as Mr. Wirt says, was chosen "by his usual commanding majority," after having addressed the electors at the polls in a speech, that detracted nothing from the fame of his eloquence. — WIRT'S *Life of Patrick Henry*, p. 392.

from a namesake of mine, and who, very probably, may be a distant relation, as our families were from the same country; mine earlier than his; two brothers migrating during the Commonwealth of England, or rather during the troubles of Charles the First. Not knowing through what other medium to address him, I take the liberty of sending my answer to his request under cover to you.

You know, my good Sir, that it is not the policy of this country to employ aliens, where it can well be avoided, either in the civil or military walks of life; but, for want of provident care and foresight, they will find themselves (indeed begin now to feel it) under the necessity of resorting to foreign aid for skilful men in the engineering and artillery corps. If my namesake is well instructed in either of these branches of military science, which, by the by, is hardly to be expected from his age, there would be no doubt of his favorable reception, without which I think it would be deceptious to encourage hopes of employment in the army of the United States; for there is a species of self-importance in all foreign officers, that cannot be gratified without doing injustice to meritorious characters among our own countrymen, who conceive, and justly, where there is no great preponderancy of experience or merit, that they are entitled to the occupancy of all offices in the gift of their government.

When I offered my Valedictory Address to the people of the United States, I little thought that any event would arise in my day, that could withdraw me from the retreat in which I expected to pass the remnant of a life worn down with cares, in ruminating on past scenes, and contemplating the future grandeur of this rising empire. But we know little of ourselves, and much less of the designs of Providence. I am, &c.

TO JAMES WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 20 January, 1799.

SIR,

To the goodness of Mr. Adams, the American minister at Berlin, I am indebted for the safe conveyance of your letter, dated the 19th of October in that city; and through the same medium I have the honor to present this acknowledgment of it.

There can be but little doubt, Sir, of our descending from the same stock, as the branches of it proceeded from the same country. At what time your ancestors left England is not mentioned. Mine came to America nearly one hundred and fifty years ago.*

The regular course of application for military appointments is to the President of the United States, through the Secretary of War. But it would be deceptious not to apprize you beforehand, that it does not accord with the policy of this government to bestow offices civil or military upon foreigners, to the exclusion of our own citizens, first, because there is an animated zeal in the latter to serve their country, and, secondly, because the former, seldom content with the rank they sustain in the service of their own country, look for higher appointments in this; which, when bestowed, unless there is an obvious reason to justify the measure, are pregnant with discontent, and therefore it is not often practised, except in those branches of military science, which relate to engineering and gunnery. In those our military establishment is defective, and men of known and acknowledged abilities, with ample testimonials, would be certainly encouraged.

* By the genealogical tables of the Washington family in England, it appears that more than one of that name emigrated to Holland, whose descendants were probably scattered over Germany.

Deeming it better to give this candid detail, than to raise hopes that might prove fallacious, this is the best apology I can offer for my plain dealing.

At the same time be pleased to accept the assurances of my being, Sir, your most obedient, &c.

TO JAMES M^cHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 27 January, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letter for Mr. McAlpin, my tailor in Philadelphia, left open for your perusal, may be delivered or not, as you shall judge best; and, if the former takes place, let it be accompanied with your sentiments on the doubtful parts of it.

It is written, first, on the supposition, that the uniform for the different grades of officers is conclusively fixed, and to be established as a standing regulation; and, secondly, on the presumption that no attempts will be made this session of Congress to repeal the law for augmenting the army of the United States, or to reduce it below its present establishment. If the former is liable to no change, and there is no indication of an attempt to effect the latter, I would go to the expense of providing a uniform, previously to the spur of the occasion, in conformity with the regulations ordered by the war department agreeably to the President's command. On the other hand, if either of the above things is likely to happen, I shall suspend doing it.

On reconsidering the uniform for the commander-in-chief, it has become a matter of doubt with me, (although, as it respects myself *personally*, I was against

all embroidery,) whether embroidery on the cape, cuffs, and pockets of the coat, and none on the buff waistcoat, would not have a disjointed and awkward appearance. It is neither required nor forbidden. Which then, in your judgment, or that of connoisseurs, if you should confer with any on the subject, would be most agreeable in itself, and accordant to what is expected? To you I submit the matter, as I also do whether the coat shall have slash cuffs, with blue flaps passing through them, and slash pockets, or both shall be in the usual manner.

These are apparently trifling matters to trouble you with; but, as it is the commencement of a new scene, it is desirable that the thing should take a right direction. I have therefore upon the whole, and since I began this letter, determined to direct Mr. McAlpin to apply to and follow your directions in making the uniform. I should not prefer a heavy embroidery, or one containing much work. A light neat one would in my opinion be more elegant and more desirable, as well for the coat as the waistcoat, if the latter is to receive any. If there are workers in this way in Philadelphia (the French are most likely to understand it), they will no doubt have a variety of patterns to choose from, and I pray you to examine them.

The eagle, too, has become part of the American cockade. Have any of them been brought into use yet? My idea of the size is, that it ought not to be larger than would cover a quarter of a dollar at most, and should be represented (for the officers) as clothed with feathers. This any ingenious silversmith can execute; and, if four were sent to me, I would thank you, and would remit the cost as soon as known to me.

I must further beg, that proper stars for the epaulets (the latter I possess) may be sent to me with

the other articles, that I may be equipped in dress *at least;* and if there are any handsome cockades (but not whimsically foolish) in wear, or any one who can make them, I should be glad if they were sent with the eagles fixed thereon, ready to be placed in the hats. Do the President and yourself wear them? Excuse this scrawl and trouble, as I wish to set out right; and be assured of the sincere esteem and regard of, dear Sir, your affectionate, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 28 January, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I have duly received your letters of the 5th, 10th, 21st, and 22d of this month, with their several enclosures. It is well known to you, that, in selecting from the documents laid before us suitable characters to fill the respective grades in the twelve additional regiments, the major-generals and myself spared no pains to find such as appeared, on every account, most likely to render efficient service to their country, and do credit to the appointment. At the same time we were not inattentive to a proper distribution of officers in the several States from which they were taken, so far as we had materials before us from which such distribution could be made. But it appeared in several instances, that there were large districts of States from which were few or no applications. In such cases we could only make up the quota from the other parts of the State, whence applications were more numerous. We had not a personal knowledge of characters in the districts before mentioned, to enable us to give them their due proportion, without

applications or recommendations; and, even if we had possessed that knowledge, we must, without knowing whether certain persons would serve or not, have hazarded nominations and appointments, which might not have been accepted. And the inconveniences and disadvantages attending this you know but too well.

That some persons would decline accepting an appointment, in a grade below that for which they had applied, was to be expected. But unless evidence of disqualification, which was not known to the general officers, should be brought forward, it was expected that their selection, made with the greatest care, uninfluenced by any local or personal considerations, and with an eye only to the public good, would not be set aside on light grounds.

In speaking on this subject, I would not be understood as expressing any dissatisfaction on account of the withholding, postponing, or rejecting names which were handed in; because I presume there is sufficient ground for such conduct. I would only wish to show, that, having before us all the evidence respecting characters, which could at that time be obtained, and examining and comparing with the greatest care the relative qualifications and pretensions of each, we were less liable to commit an error, than if we had to contend with any personal prejudices, or had the same motives to influence our conduct, which others might have from local considerations.

I observe, in the appointment of the cavalry officers, that the name of Lawrence Lewis is placed the third among the captains. In the schedule handed to you, they stood, Hite first captain, and Lewis second captain, in the six additional troops. As Hite's nomination has been withheld, I presume that Lewis comes in of course as the first captain in these six troops.

To this place he seems entitled, as much from the service he has seen (which was on the western expedition, where he acted as aid to General Morgan during that time, and which I believe is the only service that has been seen by either of the other captains), as from his proper age and respectable standing in society.

In speaking of the cavalry I must observe, that, in specifying their uniform, it was intended that their breeches should be of leather, and consequently buff instead of white. This, I doubt not, will strike you as being most proper on every account; and in that case no time should be lost in correcting the error, before the officers shall have provided their uniform.

Enclosed is a letter I received last evening from General Spotswood, by which you will see that the name of *Thomas*, instead of *John*, should be prefixed to Captain Green, of Spotsylvania. This young gentleman, from all accounts, promises to be a very valuable officer, as he has been a useful and meritorious citizen. You will be pleased to have the alteration made in its regular form. With great consideration and esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mount Vernon, 1 February, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

The letter herewith enclosed from Mr. Joel Barlow, though of old date, came to my hands only yesterday.

I have conceived it my duty to transmit it to you without delay, and without a comment, except that it must have been written with a very good, or a very bad design. Which of the two, you can judge better

than I. From the known abilities of that gentleman, such a letter could not be the result of ignorance *in him*, nor, from the implications which are to be found in it, has it been written without the privity of the French Directory.

It is incumbent on me to add, that I have not been in the habit of corresponding with Mr. Barlow. The letter now forwarded is the first I ever received from him; and *to him* I have never written one.

If then you should be of opinion, that his letter is calculated to bring on negotiation upon open, fair, and honorable ground, and merits a reply, and will instruct me as to the tenor of it, I shall with pleasure and alacrity obey your orders; more especially if there is reason to believe, that it would become a means, however small, of restoring peace and tranquillity to the United States upon just, honorable, and dignified terms; which I am persuaded is the ardent desire of all the friends of this rising empire.

With great consideration and respect, I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 25 February, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

In a letter lately received, you have given me reason to believe, that it would not be disagreeable to Mr. Harper (in case the exigencies of this country should call me to the field) to compose part of my military suite as an aid-de-camp. To have a person therein of his abilities would be as pleasing as it might be

---

* See Mr. Barlow's letter in the APPENDIX, No. XIX.

advantageous; but you have been early apprized of my determination to remain perfectly disengaged, until the period shall have arrived when a choice must be made; and a variety of considerations, which it is unnecessary to enumerate to you, must combine in fixing it.

It is not only possible, but highly probable, that, in such a crisis as would require my attendance in the field, his services in the legislature might be of infinitely more importance, than any he could render in the military line; and it is a maxim with me, that, in times of imminent danger to the country, every true patriot should occupy the post in which he can render them the most effectually. Having expressed these sentiments, the matter must rest here.

I have, it is true, given young Carroll of Carrollton expectations of becoming a volunteer aid of mine, if I should be called to the field; but this would give him neither rank nor pay in the line of the army. The latter he stood in no need of, and the former, as he could not contemplate a military life as a profession, would have been of little importance to him.

I thank you for the eagles, and wish they had been accompanied with the stars. When the cost of both is known, I will remit the amount, or direct it to be paid to you in Philadelphia. With very great esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 25 February, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 16th instant came duly to hand. I wish you at all times and upon all occa-

sions, to communicate interesting occurrences with your opinions thereon, in the manner you have designated, with the utmost unreservedness.

If the augmented force was not intended as an *in terrorem* measure, the delay in recruiting it is unaccountable, and baffles all conjecture on reasonable grounds. The zeal and enthusiasm, which were excited by the publication of the despatches from our commissioners at Paris, (which gave birth to the law authorizing the raising of twelve regiments,) are evaporated. They are now no more. And if this dull season, when men are idle from want of employment, and from that cause might be induced to enlist, is suffered to pass away also, we shall by and by, when the business of agriculture and other avocations call for their labor, set out as a forlorn hope to execute this business.*

Had the formation of the army followed closely the passage of this act, and recruiting orders had trod on the heels of that, the men who might have been raised at that time would for their numbers have been equal

* *From a Letter of General Hamilton, dated February 15th.* — "The Secretary of War has communicated to me the following disposition with regard to the superintendence of our military forces and posts. All those in the States south of Maryland, in Tennessee and Kentucky, are placed under the direction of Major-General Pinckney; those everywhere else under my direction, to which he has added the general care of the recruiting service.

"The commencement of the business of recruiting, however, is still postponed; for the reason, as assigned by the Secretary, that a supply of clothing is not yet ready. In conformity with your ideas, I have directed General Wilkinson to repair to the seat of government, in order to a more full examination of the affairs of the western scene, and to the concerting of ulterior arrangements. On this and on every other subject of our military concerns, I shall be happy to receive from time to time such suggestions and instructions, as you may be pleased to communicate. I shall regularly advise you of the progress of things, and especially of every material occurrence."

to any in the world; inasmuch as the most reputable yeomanry of the country were ready to step forward with alacrity.

Far removed from the scene, I might ascribe these delays to wrong causes, and therefore will hazard no opinion respecting them; but I have no hesitation in pronouncing, that, unless a material change takes place, our military theatre affords but a gloomy prospect to those, who are to perform the principal parts in the drama. Sincerely and affectionately I am yours, &c.

TO TIMOTHY PICKERING, SECRETARY OF STATE.

Confidential.

Mount Vernon, 3 March, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

The unexpectedness of the event communicated in your letter of the 21st ultimo did, as you may suppose, surprise me not a little. But far, very far indeed was this surprise short of what I experienced the next day, when, by a very intelligent gentleman, immediately from Philadelphia, I was informed, that there had been no *direct* overture from the government of France to that of the United States for a negotiation; on the contrary, that M. Talleyrand was playing the same loose and roundabout game he had attempted the year before with our envoys; and which, as in that case, might mean any thing or nothing, as would subserve his purposes best.

Had we approached the ante-chamber of this gentleman when he opened the door to us, and there waited for a formal invitation into the interior, the governments would have met upon equal ground, and we might have advanced or receded according to cir-

cumstances, without commitment. In plainer words, had we said to M. Talleyrand, through the channel of his communication; "We still are, as we always have been, ready to settle by fair negotiation all differences between the two nations upon open, just, and honorable terms, and it rests with the Directory (after the indignities with which *our* attempts to effect this have been treated), if they are equally sincere, to come forward in an unequivocal manner, and prove it by their acts;" such conduct would have shown a dignified willingness on our part to negotiate, and would have proved their sincerity on the other. Under my present view of the subject, this would have been the course I should have pursued; keeping equally in view the horrors of war, and the dignity of the government.

But, not being acquainted with all the information and the motives, which induced the measure, I may have taken a wrong impression, and therefore shall say nothing further on the subject at this time. With sincere esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO JOHN ADAMS, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES.

Mount Vernon, 3 March, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favor of the 19th ultimo, mentioning the nomination of Mr. Murray to be minister plenipotentiary to the French Republic.*

* An intimation had been given by the French government, through Mr. Murray, the American minister in Holland, that "whatever plenipotentiary the government of the United States might send to France, to put an end to the existing differences between the two countries, would be undoubtedly received with the respect due to the representative of a free, independent, and powerful nation." This was stated in a letter from Talleyrand, minister of foreign relations, to M. Pichon,

With the writer of the letter, which I did myself the honor to enclose in my last to you, I truly observed that I had never held any correspondence; and I only knew him in his public mission from this country to the Barbary States, the functions of which he discharged at that time with ability and propriety. I have, indeed, lately heard of a letter that has been published, which he wrote to Mr. Baldwin, filled with abuse of this government and its administration; but I have never met with it in any of the papers which I take.

As you have had more opportunities of knowing this man's character than have fallen to me, I have no doubt but you have formed a just estimate of him; and, as I had no other desire than to be useful in transmitting any sentiments you might wish to convey,

---

secretary of legation from the French Republic at the Hague. A copy of the letter was given by M. Pichon to Mr. Murray, who forwarded it to the American government. On the 18th of February, the President communicated the letter to the Senate, and nominated Mr. Murray to be minister plenipotentiary to the French Republic. Before the Senate came to a decision, the President concluded to send three envoys to France instead of one, and on the 25th of February he nominated Oliver Ellsworth, Patrick Henry, and William Vans Murray to be envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary to the French Republic. The two former were not to embark till they should obtain assurances from the French Directory, that they should be received in character, enjoy all the prerogatives attached to that character by the law of nations, and that a minister or ministers of equal powers should be appointed to treat with them. The Senate confirmed the nomination by a large majority. See *Executive Journal, for February 18th, 25th, 27th.*

Mr. Henry declined the appointment on account of ill health, as appears by the following letter to the Secretary of State.

"Charlotte County, Virginia, 16 April, 1799.

"Sir,

"Your favor of the 25th ultimo did not reach me till two days ago. I have been confined for several weeks by a severe indisposition, and am still so sick as to be scarcely able to write this. My advanced age and increasing debility compel me to abandon every idea of serving my country where the scene of operation is far distant, and her interests

I shall, impressed with your observations, take no notice of this letter.

I sincerely pray, that in the discharge of the arduous and important duties committed to you, your health may be unimpaired, and that you may long live to enjoy those blessings, which must flow to our country, if we shall be so happy as to pass this critical period in an honorable and dignified manner, without being involved in the horrors and calamities of war.

Mrs. Washington and Mrs. Lewis (late Miss Custis) thank you for your kind remembrance of them, and offer their best respects to you; at the same time that they unite with me in every good wish for the perfect restoration of health to Mrs. Adams. With sentiments of very great respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

---

call for incessant and long-continued exertion. Conscious as I am of my inability to discharge the duties of envoy to France, to which, by the commission you send me, I am called, I herewith return it.

"I cannot, however, forbear expressing on this occasion the high sense I entertain of the honor done me by the President and Senate in the appointment; and I beg of you, Sir, to present me to them in terms of the most dutiful regard, assuring them that this mark of their confidence in me, at a crisis so eventful, is a very agreeable and flattering proof of their consideration towards me, and that nothing short of absolute necessity could induce me to withhold my little aid from an administration whose abilities, patriotism, and virtue deserve the gratitude and reverence of all their fellow-citizens. With sentiments of very high regard, I am, Sir, &c.

"P. HENRY."

The vacancy thus occasioned in the commission was filled by William Richardson Davie, of North Carolina, who was nominated to the Senate on the 5th of December following.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 25 March, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

You will not only consider this letter as a private one, but as a friendly one from G. W. to J. M.; and, if the sentiments which you will find in it are delivered with more freedom and candor than are agreeable, say so; not by implication only, but in explicit language; and I will promise to offend no more by such conduct, but confine myself, if occasion should require it, to an official correspondence.

Thus premising, let me, in the name and behalf of the officers, who have been appointed, and of the army intended to be raised, ask what keeps back the commissions, and arrests the recruiting service? Be assured that both, among the friends of government, excite astonishment and discontent. Blame is in every mind, but it is not known where to fix it. Some attach it to the President, some to the Secretary of War, and some, fertile in invention, seek for other causes. Many of the appointed officers have quitted their former occupations, that they might be in perfect readiness to proceed in their military duties, the moment they should receive their commissions and recruiting instructions. Others, who were about to enter into business and plans of future life, stand suspended. Many are highly disgusted; some talk of giving up the idea of becoming officers, unable to remain longer in the awkward situation they are involved in; and all are complaining. Applications are made to me by numbers to know what the cause of the delay is, what they are to expect, and what they ought to do.

What could I say? Am I not kept in as much ignorance as they are themselves? Am I advised of any

appointment, any changes, which have taken place; any of the views or designs of government relative to the army? It is not unreasonable to suppose, that, if there be reasons of state inducing the policy of these delays, I was entitled to sufficient confidence to be let into the secret; or, if they proceeded from uncontrollable causes, I, still more than the public, ought not to have been left in the field of conjecture, without a guide to direct me to a knowledge of them. For I shall frankly declare, that I do not, nor ever shall, consider myself in the light of a mercenary officer. Nothing short of a high sense of duty could have placed me in my present situation; and though I stand bound, and will obey the call of my country whenever it is made, agreeably to my letter of acceptance, none will regret the event more poignantly, none will forsake the walks of retirement with more heartfelt sorrow, none can leave them with more real inconvenience to their private concerns, than I shall do. A sixteen years' absence from home (with short intervals) could not fail to derange them considerably, and to require all the time I can spare from the usual avocations of life to bring them into tune again. But this is not all, nor the worst; for, being the executor, the administrator, and trustee for others' estates, my greatest anxiety is to leave all these concerns in such a clear and distinct form, that no reproach may attach itself to me, when I shall have taken my departure for the land of spirits.

I have been thus full, as it regards myself, in order to show you, that information in matters of a military nature is necessary for my government, that, thereby having a prospective view of things, I may prepare accordingly, and not, though detached from the army until the exigencies of our affairs may require my

presence with it, appear like a person just dropped from the clouds when I take the command, ignorant of preceding occurrences. Nor will it, without doing great violence to the concerns of others equally with my own, be in my power to "take up my bed and walk" at any unexpected requirement, nor without great exertions, which it may not be in my power to make on a sudden call, unless previously hastened (which would be unnecessary), and unless I could discern beforehand the utility of the measure by the gradual unfolding of the prospect before us.

I shall now, with your permission, make a few observations as they respect the recruiting service. Had the organization of the augmented corps, and consequent instructions for raising it, followed as close on the passage of the law as the nature of the case would have permitted, a finer army for the size of it (with the discipline it might have received) the world had never seen. But the golden opportunity is passed, and probably will never return again. The zeal, enthusiasm, and indeed resentment, which warmed the breasts of the American youth, and would have induced the sons of the respectable yeomanry, in all parts of the United States, to enlist as non-commissioned officers and privates, are now no more. They are evaporated, and a listlessness has supplied their place. The next most favorable opportunity, namely, the idle and dreary scenes of winter, which bring on dissipation and want, from the cessation of labor, has also passed away. The enlivening prospect of spring, the calls of the husbandman for laborers in the approaching busy season, have supplanted all thoughts of becoming soldiers; and now many young gentlemen, who had conditionally last summer and autumn engaged their companies, will find it difficult to enlist

a single man of those so engaged; the latter pretending, that, having waited a considerable time to see if their services would be wanted in the field, and no overtures being made, it became necessary for them to seek some other employment.

What is the natural consequence of all this? Why, that we must take the riff-raff of the populous cities, convicts and foreigners, or have officers without men. But even this is not the worst of it. The augmented corps, if I have conceived the matter rightly, must have been intended as a well-organized and well-disciplined body of men, for others, in case of need, to resort to and take example from. Will this be the case if the enemy shall invade this country? Far from it! What better, in the first instance, are regiments so composed than militia? And what prospect have those, who command them, of rendering service to their country, or doing honor to themselves in the field, opposed to veteran troops, practised in tactics, and unaccustomed to defeat? These, my dear McHenry, are serious considerations to a man, who has nothing to gain, and is putting every thing to hazard.

When I began this letter I intended to stop here; but, as I may not again write to you with the freedom I now do, I shall make a few remarks on some other transactions, which have not struck me in the most favorable point of view.

The two major-generals and myself were called to Philadelphia in November last, and there detained five weeks, very inconveniently to all of us, at an inclement season, in wading through volumes of applications and recommendations for military appointments; and I will venture to say, that it was executed with as much assiduity, and under as little influence of favor or prejudice, as a work of that sort (from the credentials

which were laid before us) ever was accomplished. And what has followed? Why, any member of Congress, who had a friend to serve, or a prejudice to indulge, could set them all at nought. Out of a number, I will select one instance only in proof of this. It is a striking one. The case of Gibbs I allude to. He was personally known to you, General Hamilton, and myself, in his former services. He served through the *whole* revolutionary war, from the assembling of the first troops at Cambridge to the closing of the military drama at the conclusion of peace, without reproach; and in the last act of it, if I mistake not, was a major in the selected corps of light infantry. He was strongly recommended by Generals Lincoln, Knox, Brooks, and Jackson, all on the same theatre with himself, and who ought to be perfectly acquainted with his respectability and pretensions; yet the vote of a member of Congress (I presume) was more respected *——

Another thing I will remark on, because, if the practice is continued, you will find that serious discontents and evils will result from it.

I find by the gazettes (I have *no other* information of these matters), that Lieutenant Mercer of the light dragoons is promoted to the rank of captain in that corps. In the arrangement of officers, where every attention was paid, that personal knowledge or information could render, to *merit*, *age*, *respectability*, and *standing* in the community, he was not even placed (if my memory serves me) high up among the lieutenants. What then will those lieutenants, who are his seniors in that arrangement, greatly his seniors in age, of at least as much respectability, better known,

* The remainder of the paragraph, consisting of two or three words, is illegible in the manuscript.

and of equal merit, think of having him placed over them. Mercer compared to them is a boy; and in such an army, as it was our wish to form, it will have an odd appearance to place a young man of twenty or twenty-one years of age over a lieutenant of thirty, in every other respect his equal.

I do not mean to derogate from the merits or deserts of this young gentleman. On the contrary, I wish to see them properly rewarded, although his whole family are bitter in their enmity to the general government. Nor would I be understood to mean, that, if a captain (and so of any other grade) declines his appointment during the act of formation, the vacancy is necessarily to be filled by the next in seniority. So far from this, I maintain, that, when a vacancy is occasioned by non-acceptance, it may without injustice be filled by a new character as in the first instance. But it is my opinion, at the same time, that, if you have recourse to promotion, the arrangement, which was made by the board of general officers in all its parts, who had regard to all the combinations and qualifications that have been enumerated in settling the relative rank, is the safest guide you could resort to.

It is not my intention to dispute the powers of the President to make this or any other promotion, which his inclination or the solicitation of others may prompt him to; but I will add, without fear of contradiction from any one acquainted with the usages and prescriptive rights of armies, that, if he wishes to preserve the peace and harmony of ours, rules must be observed in promotions, and the feelings of the officers attended to.

These observations relative to the promotion of Lieutenant Mercer are not the result of any discontent

I have heard expressed on the occasion; for, except those who take the Philadelphia gazette, but a few of the officers may be acquainted therewith, and of those few I have seen none since its annunciation to the public. It is on general grounds they are made, and by judging of the feeling of others by what would be my own in a similar case; for I do not think it will be a very reconcilable matter to gentlemen of more respectable ages, better known in the walks of life, and much more likely to recruit men, to have a young man fresh from college placed over their heads.

As vacancies have happened in the cavalry by non-acceptances, and promotions have begun, may I ask if there would be any impropriety in letting Mr. Custis step from a cornetcy into the rank of lieutenant? If I mistake not, in the arrangement given in, he stands the first for promotion; that is, he was made the senior cornet. The major-generals were desirous of placing him as lieutenant in the first instance; but, his age considered, I thought it more eligible that he should enter in the lowest grade of commissioned officers. If ample fortune, a good education, more than common abilities, and a good disposition, free from vice of any kind, give him a title, in the nineteenth year of his age, his pretensions (though not to the injury of others) are good. But it is not my desire to ask this as a favor. I never have, and never shall, solicit any thing for myself or connexions. I mean nothing more than the statement of facts, in order to bring his situation to view.

There is one matter more, which I was in doubt whether to mention to you or not, because it is of a more delicate nature than any I have touched upon; but finally friendship has got the better of my scruples.

It respects yourself personally. You will recollect, I dare say, that more than once I expressed to you my opinion of the expediency of committing the details of the department to the exertion of others, and of bestowing your thoughts and attention on the more important duties of it; which, in the scenes we were contemplating, were alone sufficient to occupy the time and all the consideration of the Secretary. I went no further then, nor should I have renewed the subject now, had not the delay in issuing the commissions and commencing the recruiting service excited great reprobation and blame, though, as I have observed before, no one knows where with precision to fix it. Generally, however, it is attributed to the want of system and exertion in the department of war. To apprize you of this is my motive for the communication.

I prefaced the sentiments of this letter with a request, that they might be considered as proceeding from a private man to his friend. No one would be struck more forcibly than myself with the impropriety of such a letter from the Commander-in-chief of the army of the United States to the Secretary of War. If they are received in good part, the end is obtained. If otherwise, my motives and the purity of my intentions are the best apology I can offer for the liberty I have taken. In either case, however, be assured of this truth, that, with very great esteem and regard, I remain, my dear Sir, &c.*

* To this letter the Secretary of War answered in detail, explaining all the principal points, and enumerating the difficulties with which he had to contend, some of which were formidable.

"You will no doubt perceive," he added in conclusion, "that the situation into which I have been thrown during the last year by others, who prevented all those measures from being carried into effect, which the public expected would necessarily take place, in conformity to the

TO CHARLES C. PINCKNEY, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 31 March, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 8th instant from Charleston has been duly received, and it gave us the pleasure of hearing that you, Mrs. Pinckney, and Miss Pinckney had arrived in good health at that place. Although your report of the arrangement for South Carolina and Georgia, your reconnoitre of the seaboard to St. Mary's, and visit to the posts on the Indian frontier of the latter State, will be made to the department of war, I should be glad, nevertheless, to know the result of it; for, although I do not mean to *act* in the present state of our military concerns, yet it is my wish to be regularly informed of the *real* situation of them; that I may not have every thing to learn, if the exigencies of our affairs should require my attendance in the field. To have been informed of the arrangements made by you with General (now governor) Davie would have been satisfactory also.

I am disposed to believe, from circumstances which had first got to my knowledge before I left the helm of government, that the garrisons on the frontier of Georgia required a strict inspection; not only for the purpose of restoring due subordination, but for the correction of other misdemeanors in the officers. Your determination, therefore, to look closely into these matters, and to establish strict discipline, is highly proper, and will certainly be supported. An army cannot be

laws, could not fail to attach to me much censure, and excite in the minds of persons, who could not be informed of the facts, that I wanted capacity for the proper conducting of my department. What could I do in such a case? I have submitted to a censure, which those who know all ought to relieve me from, on every fair occasion where it can be done with propriety." — *March* 31*st*.

governed without, and no mistake in him who commands is greater, or more fatal to its existence, and the welfare of the country, than lax discipline. Nor is it the right road to true and permanent popularity. Civility is due to, but obedience is required from, all its members. These, accompanied with strict justice, and a proper attention to army rights and wants, will secure love and respect; while one indulgence begets an application for another and another, until order is lost in disorder, and contempt of the commander brings up the rear.

I shall be very glad to see Brigadier-General Washington on his route to Princeton, but he will find but little to do in the military line in this State. To what cause to attribute the delay I know not; but the fact is, that not an officer, that I have heard of, has received his commission, or had any orders to recruit. The enthusiasm of last summer and autumn was suffered to evaporate for want of these. The dreary months of winter have passed away also, and are now succeeded by the opening of spring, when laborers are in demand by the husbandmen, and for other avocations. In a word, all is a mystery to me.

I have very little more knowledge of the captains in the Virginia line, as arranged by us at Philadelphia, than what was derived from the source of information then laid before us. I have no hesitation, however, in mentioning the name of a gentleman conditionally, to whom, under my present view of them, I should give a decided preference. It is Presley Thornton, son of one of the most respectable gentlemen of the same name, now deceased, in this State. He is thirty or thereabouts, and amiable in his character. He was a British officer during our revolution, but would not fight against his country, and therefore went to

Gibraltar, and was in garrison there during its siege by the Spaniards, where it is said he distinguished himself by his gallant behaviour.

The condition which I alluded to, and which I annex to this recommendation, is, that, if I should want him myself, and circumstances in the combinations I should have to make in the choice of my own aids-de-camp should not be opposed to it, you may not take amiss my calling him into my military suite. I have never given him the most distant hint of such an intention, nor would I have him know, that it ever was in contemplation; especially as it is an event that may never happen. Indeed, I mean to be under no engagement to any of my aids, until I am about to enter on my military duties. I am always your sincere and affectionate, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 7 April, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

When your letters of the 30th and 31st ultimo were brought here, I was on a survey of some land I hold in the vicinity of Alexandria. To complete this business I was employed near three days; and now company will allow me to do but little more than to acknowledge the receipt of your letters.

Two things, however, I shall not forbear mentioning at this time. The first is, that, while I was at Philadelphia and since, when I heard your conduct arraigned for not having the augmented force organized sooner, and for the consequent delay in recruiting, I did then and on all other proper occasions declare, that

circumstances over which you had no control were the causes, and that no blame ought to be attached to you. The other matter is, that, if the issuing of commissions to those, who have accepted their appointments, is to be suspended until you hear from all those, who have not acknowledged the receipt of your circular letter, or some missive (if the circular is not competent thereto) is not given, by which the accepting officers may know what they have to rely on, be entitled to pay, and be authorized, when they shall be so instructed, to enter on the recruiting service, it may be months, nay a year, before this will happen.

Let me ask, then, if there would be any impropriety in publishing in the gazettes of the respective States the names and grades of those belonging thereto, who have returned no answer, requesting a yea or a nay, without further delay, assigning the reasons for such a mode of application. A notification of this kind would reach them through the medium of some friend, even if they did not see the gazettes themselves, and accomplish in a short time what may be tedious without. I will add no more at present, except that I am always your affectionate, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 23 April, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have perused with attention your instructions to General Hamilton, and can readily conceive from the purport of them what the tenor of those are, which you have issued to General Pinckney. These instructions

appear to me to be well digested, and are appropriate to the ends contemplated.*

I once thought (it being more regular), that the old troops under the command of General Wilkinson had better remain subordinate to the orders of General Hamilton, to whom, through the department of war, for the reason alleged in the instructions, all reports and returns ought to be made. But, on more mature consideration of the multiplied, extensive, and checkered position of those troops, I am disposed to believe that your plan is preferable.

In my last I gave what I conceived to be the reasons why you were uninformed of the intentions of so many of the appointed officers, and took the liberty of suggesting a mode by which their acceptance, or refusal, might speedily be ascertained. This suggestion and your circular, which now appears in all the gazettes, render it unnecessary for me to say any thing more on that head. And if the obstacles, which were opposed to the preparatory measures for recruiting, were such as not to be overcome, like many other things, most desirable, but unattainable, we may regret the loss, though we submit to the disappointment.

Until your circular appeared, I do not believe that it was the expectation of the newly appointed officers, who had not received their commissions, that they were to draw pay from the date of their acceptances; and to this uncertainty, after having thrown themselves out of other business, was their discontent to be ascribed. Your circular communication, and a just arrangement of rank hereafter, will, no doubt, put all matters right. But if these officers are not speedily employed in the recruiting service, a clamor will soon

* See APPENDIX, No. XX.

arise in another quarter; for it will be asked why are they in actual pay and unemployed.

Care will be taken, I presume, in settling relative rank not to be governed by the date of acceptances, for that would give to the officers of those States, who are most contiguous to the seat of government, advantages which would be as unjust as they are great.

I do not recollect with precision the circumstances you allude to, as having taken place in the year 1792 under the auspices of one of your predecessors. But however anxious officers are to be possessed of their commissions, I have no hesitation in declaring it as my opinion, that I see no cause they would have to complain of their being withheld, for the reasons you have mentioned, when the matter is explained to them, and they are in the receipt of emolument. With respect to Connecticut and the States south of Virginia, I was at no loss to account for the delays, which had taken place in them, not only as it respected the recruiting service, but as it related to the appointment of the officers also.

General Hamilton having communicated to me his arrangement of the State of Virginia into districts and subdivisions, with the places of rendezvous in each, I have suggested a few important alterations in the subdistricts with which I am best acquainted.

In the revised printed instructions for recruiting, which you have been pleased to send to me, there are several blanks, which I presume will be filled up before they are finally issued.

The quotation of the answer given to your representation respecting the suspension of the arrangement, and consequent delay in recruiting, betrays a manifest want of knowledge of the subject. There was a combination of circumstances at the passing of

ter upon the *principle* of the answer, could there been a stronger reason assigned against delay, the *difficulty* of obtaining men?*

If the enumerated obstacles were such as t retard the recruiting service, it ought to have menced with redoubled ardor. The voice of people, as expressed by their representatives, adj this force necessary. The law was positive. W then lay a power to dispense with or suspend i will go no farther, however, on this point. Pe I have gone too far already; but, as you hav only authorized, but requested, that I would co nicate my sentiments to you with freedom and dor, I could not restrain this effusion, when I ack edge and have declared upon all proper occa that you were not responsible for the delay in o izing the army; as you have been informed in last letter.

On the case of Major Gibbs, I shall make bu

---

* Among other obstacles, that interposed to retard the recruiti vice, the Secretary of War mentioned the ground taken by the dent, as affording less encouragement than he expected.

"When I spoke of the time we had lost," said he, "after proposals for augmenting the army had been rejected or procrast what was the reply of the President on the 28th of October observed; 'As to the recruiting service, I wonder whether the been any enthusiasm, which would induce men of common se enlist for five dollars a month, who could have fifteen when they g by sea, or for common work at land? There has been no r plan, that I have seen as yet, formed for the maintenance of the One thing I know, that regiments are costly articles everywher more so in this country than in any other under the sun. If th tion sees a great army to maintain, without an enemy to fight, may arise an enthusiasm that seems to be little foreseen.'"—*Mar*

short remarks. First, that it was not from any predilection for the man, that he was brought forward by the board of general officers; and secondly, that I should have thought, that the testimony of Generals Lincoln, Knox, Brooks, Jackson, and others, added to the weight of that board, would be a counterpoise to the objections, unless something injurious to his character was adduced. But, with respect to young Mercer's promotion, I cannot but express my regrets; notwithstanding the high opinion I have of his merit, and the sincere regard I entertained for his deceased father. This promotion, you may rely on it, is radically wrong, and will be felt sorely.* Although no one is less disposed than I am to call in question the right of the President to make appointments, with the participation of the Senate, yet I must be permitted to add, that, if there is not a good deal of circumspection observed in the exercise of it, as it respects the regulation of the army, he will find it much easier to plunge into, than to extricate himself from, embarrassments occasioned by injudicious arrangements. Of this I can speak from the experience I have had.

In the arrangement of Mr. Mercer at Philadelphia, his comparative pretensions were duly considered, and a lieutenancy was conceived to be a handsome appointment for him. Many applications for captaincies of dragoons from meritorious characters, who had had commands in the horse on the western expedition in 1794, could not, from the smallness of that corps, be accommodated; and on that account only they were turned over to the infantry. Among these a Captain Thomas Turner, highly spoken of as an officer of horse, and

* The Secretary of War wrote afterwards, that Mr. Mercer did not accept the appointment, but without stating on what grounds he declined.

a very respectable character, is numbered. How then must this gentleman, how must Captain Randolph, so highly recommended by General Morgan for past services, how must others, who served through a winter's campaign on that occasion with *éclat*, and how must the senior lieutenants of equal pretensions with those of Mr. Mercer, feel on the appointment of a student just from college in preference to them? The question is easily answered; but as there is no remedy for it now, my only motive for dwelling on the case is to show you how necessary precaution is in your military movements; and to prove, moreover, that, after five weeks' diligent application of the three first officers of your army, their work ought not to be battered down by sinister or local considerations, unless impeachments, or discoveries unknown while they were about it, are of sufficient weight to affect this measure.*

* Additional light is thrown upon some of the topics which are here discussed, in a letter from General Hamilton to the Commander-in-chief, written a few days afterwards.

"At length," he says, "the recruiting for the additional regiments has begun in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. The enclosed return of clothing will sufficiently explain to you, that it has commenced at least as soon as the preparations by the department of war would permit. It might now also proceed in Maryland and Massachusetts, and the next post will, I trust, enable me to add Virginia, but that I do not think it expedient to outgo our supply of clothing. It will have the worst possible effect, if the recruits are to wait a length of time for their clothing. I anticipate your mortification at such a state of things. Various causes are supposed to contribute to it.

"It is said, that the President has heretofore not thought it of importance to accelerate the raising of the army; and it is well understood, that the Secretary of the Treasury is not convinced of its utility. Yet he affirms, that, for a long time past, he has been ready and willing to give every aid depending on his department. The Secretary of War imputes the deficiency in the article of clothing to a failure of a contract, which he had made, and to the difficulty of suddenly finding a substitute by purchases in the market. It is however obvious, that the means, which have been since pursued, have not been the best

Having now gone through all the points of your last letter, I have only to declare, that the observations I have made on the several parts of them, and the opinions delivered thereon, proceed from the purest motives, and from an earnest desire, that the military system may be well composed, may harmonize in all its parts, may perfectly answer the end of its institution, and that the President and Secretary of War may find no difficulty, but be quite easy and happy in their government of it. As it respects myself, I have no object to promote, separate from the general welfare. I have no predilections, no prejudices to gratify, no friends, whose interests or views I wish to advance at the expense of propriety, and, I may add in the sincerity of my heart, there is no wish of it equal to that of there being no exigency in our affairs, which may call me from retirement to take the direction of our forces.

With sincere esteem and regard, I am, my dear Sir, &c.

---

calculated for despatch. The materials procured at distant places have been brought to Philadelphia to be made up. They are stated to be adequate in quantity. If the Secretary's energies for execution were equal to his good dispositions, the public service under his care would prosper as much as could be desired. It is only to be regretted, that good dispositions will not alone suffice, and that, in the nature of things, there can be no reliance that the future progress will be more satisfactory than the past.

"The officers for North Carolina have been appointed. No nomination has yet come forward from South Carolina. Not a single field-officer has yet been appointed for the regiment to be raised in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode Island. It seems the members of Congress dissuaded from the nomination of those, who were proposed by the general officers, and promised to recommend preferable characters. But this promise has not been performed. This want of organization is an obstacle to the progress of the affairs of this regiment. It is understood that the President has resolved to appoint the officers to the Provisional Army, and that the Secretary has thought fit to charge the *senators* of each State with the designation of characters." — *New York, May 3d.*

TO JOHN MARSHALL.

Mount Vernon, 5 May, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

With infinite pleasure I received the news of your election.* For the honor of the district I wish the majority had been greater; but let us be contented, and hope, as the tide is turning, the current will soon ——† favor.

I am sorry to find that the publication you allude to should have given you a moment's disquietude. I can assure you it made no impression on my mind, of the tendency apprehended by you.‡

The doubt you have expressed of Mr. Hancock's election is as unexpected as it is painful. In these

* As a delegate to Congress.

† The original is here defaced and illegible.

‡ *From Mr. Marshall's Letter.* — "You may possibly have seen a paragraph in a late publication, stating that several important offices in the gift of the executive, and among others that of Secretary of State, had been attainable by me. Few of the unpleasant occurrences produced by my declaration as a candidate for Congress (and they have been very abundant) have given me more real chagrin than this. To make a parade of proffered offices is a vanity, which I trust I do not possess; but to boast of one never in my power would argue a littleness of mind at which I ought to blush.

"I know not how the author may have acquired his information, but I beg leave to assure you that he never received it directly nor indirectly from me. I had no previous knowledge that such a publication was designed, or I would certainly have suppressed so much of it as relates to this subject. The writer was unquestionably actuated by a wish to serve me, and by resentment at the various malignant calumnies, which have been so profusely bestowed on me. One of these was, that I only wished a seat in Congress for the purpose of obtaining some office, which my devotion to the administration might procure. To repel this was obviously the motive of the indiscreet publication I so much regret.

"A wish to rescue myself in your opinion from the imputation of an idle vanity, which forms, if I know myself, no part of my character, will I trust apologize for the trouble this explanation may give you." — *Richmond, May 1st.*

parts we had set it down as certain; and our calculations went to eleven instead of nine. A few days now will give us the result of all the elections to Congress and the legislature of the State; and, as you are at the fountain of information, respecting the politics of the members, give me, I pray you, the state of the parties on each side, if you have leisure and can ascertain it. With very sincere esteem and regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BUSHROD WASHINGTON.

Mount Vernon, 5 May, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of the 26th ultimo, as also that of the 10th, has been duly received. The election of Generals Lee and Marshall are grateful to my feelings. I wish, however, both of them had been elected by greater majorities; but they are elected, and that alone is pleasing.

As the tide is turned, I hope it will come in with a full flow; but this will not happen, if there is any relaxation on the part of the Federalists. We are sure there will be none on the part of the *Republicans*, as they have very erroneously called themselves. It is apprehended *latterly*, that Mr. Hancock will not carry his election, and that in numbers we shall not exceed nine. In point of abilities, I think the superiority will be greatly on the side of Federalism.

I have mentioned Mr. Turner's name to the Secretary of War; but, in a letter I received from him last night, he thinks the President has given, or will give, the vacant troop to a gentleman in another State. Our love to Mrs. Washington. I am, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 5 May, 1799.

My dear Sir,

Your private letter of the 29th ultimo was received yesterday, and requires but a short reply. From an observation of yours, in answer to my letter of the 23d ultimo, I perceive my meaning with respect to *relative* rank has been misunderstood; or, if taken properly, I must adhere to the opinion I gave of the injustice, which would be inflicted upon the officers of States remote from the seat of government, if those in the vicinity of it are to *rank* before them, because they were on the spot to announce their acceptance of their appointments at an earlier day.

Rank and pay are distinct things. The officer, who may have received the latter to-day sustains no injury from him who received it yesterday; but if the commencement of *rank* in the same grades is to be regulated (under the circumstances I have mentioned) from the dates of their acceptances, it will have injustice stamped on the face of it. For, in that case, those who are most remote, not by any act avoidable in themselves, but from the nature of things, become in almost every instance juniors; when perhaps many of them, in consideration of former services, or other weighty pretensions, might justly be entitled to seniority.

The mode, which you have suggested to the President for settling the rank of the field-officers, is certainly the best that could be offered to his consideration, and I trust will be approved by him. With very great esteem and regard I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO DANIEL MORGAN.

Mount Vernon, 10 May, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received a letter from the Secretary of War, in which, after giving it as the opinion of the President of the United States, that officers for the twenty-four additional regiments ought to be had in contemplation, and that, in case the exigency of our affairs should require them, greater despatch might be used in the formation, he speaks as follows.

"The selection of officers for the eventual army appears to be an object of primary importance, requiring all imaginary circumspection and care. Their characters ought if possible to be such as to inspire a general and well-grounded confidence, that the fate of their country may be safely intrusted to them.

"I have, therefore, to request you will accord your full attention to the subject, and furnish me as soon as practicable with a list of the names of such characters in your State, to fill the annexed military grades, as in your opinion are best qualified, and willing to serve in case of an actual war, which will render it indispensable to recruit men for this army.

"Every cautionary measure is necessary to guard against errors in appointments, which too frequently result from the ease with which recommendations are generally obtained, the partialities of friends, and a delusive hope that men of bad habits, by being transplanted into the army will become good men, and good officers.

"The officers proposed to be drawn from the State of Virginia are four colonels, eight majors, forty captains, and eighty subalterns of infantry; one colonel, two majors, eleven captains, and twenty-two subalterns

of cavalry. In making the selection, it will be proper to allow, if fit characters present themselves for a choice, a due proportion of captains and subalterns to the several counties, according to their respective population, as well with a view to facilitate the recruiting service as to give general satisfaction. This rule, however, is not meant to be so invariably observed as to exclude great superiority of talents by too strict an adherence.

"As circumstances may occur at the time of the President's making the appointments, which may render it proper to make some changes in the list with which I may be furnished, you are requested not to give the parties recommended such positive assurances, as will render change impracticable without wounding too sensibly their feelings."

Having given you these extracts so fully, but little remains for me to add, further than to request your aid in carrying the Secretary's views into effect, conformably to the principles he has laid down; and that you will consider my application to you as an evidence of my confidence in your knowledge of characters, (especially of the old and meritorious officers of the Virginia line), and in your patriotism and willingness to form a respectable corps of officers for our native State.

I have no objection to your conversing on this occasion with Colonel Parker, or others on whom you can place reliance. Let it be clearly understood, however, that the inquiry and selection here proposed is eventual only, not a thing actually resolved on, but preparatory in case the President in the recess of Congress should, from the aspect of things, deem it expedient to carry the law for raising twenty-four regiments into effect.

That you may be enabled the better to understand that part of the Secretary's letter, which relates to the distribution of officers to counties, I enclose the inspector-general's allotment of the States into divisions and subdivisions for the convenience of recruiting and rendezvousing in each.

Hoping that you continue to improve in your health, I remain with very sincere esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 13 May, 1799.

SIR,

That no time might be lost in carrying the President's plan,* and the request contained in your letter of the 10th ultimo, into effect, I have solicited the aid of Generals Morgan, Lee, and Marshall, and Colonels Heth and Carrington. If other fit and confidential characters should offer, as worthy of employment in the proposed selection, I will speak or write to them also, for it is on others I must rely. An absence, with short intervals only, of near twenty-five years with the consequent changes, has in a great measure obliterated my former acquaintance with the people of *this State*, and my knowledge of the rising generation in it is very limited indeed. The task I am imposing on others is delicate, and not of the pleasantest kind; because, except in a few instances, it will be very difficult in such an extensive State as Virginia to ascertain who would or would not accept appointments in the Provisional Army without previous inquiry; and

* The substance of this plan is contained in the preceding letter to General Morgan.

to make this inquiry, on the hazardous ground of rejection, involves delicacy; namely, as to the selected, who may have given his consent; to the selector, who may have asked it; and to the department, that is to approve or disapprove the measure.

Viewing the matter in this light, let me ask if there would be any impropriety in a notification from the war office to the effect, that, as events may render it expedient to raise the twenty-four regiments, and, as it has been found from experience that much time (when probably it could be the least spared) would be required to select and organize the officers therefor, it is requested, that all those, who are desirous of serving their country on the terms specified in that act, would without delay signify the same, (producing such recommendations as would bring them forward under favorable auspices,) and the grades to which reasonable pretensions would entitle them, to G. W., or whomsoever in this State (the same in other States if the measure is approved) you might be pleased to appoint, for the purpose of receiving the applications; which ought all of them to be in writing, accompanied by the testimonials of merit.

In a State spreading over so much ground as Virginia, it would require much time, and be scarcely possible even then, to make the object of government known, and to carry your plan of apportionment into effect by any method short of the one I have suggested; and, if the notice is not general, the selection must of consequence be partial.

After allowing sufficient time for the applications to come in, one might then be able, with the aid of such characters as could be confided in, to select and form, from the materials thus amassed, officers agreeably to your list and apportionment to the State; and other-

wise I do not see how it can be accomplished in any reasonable time, much less efficiently.

There may be objections to this mode, which do not occur to me; but sure I am it would be found the most likely means of drawing characters from all parts of the State, or, failing therein, of obviating any charge of partiality; for, if men will not come forward when invited, it is their own fault, and not that of the government.

Under any circumstances I consider this preparatory measure of the President's as eligible; but I am led to believe, from his having adopted it at *this time*, without any previous intimation before he left the seat of government, that stronger indications of hostility have been received than appeared when he went away. If so, I think it ought to be communicated to me in confidence; for it must not be expected, that I can quit my family and private concerns at a moment's warning.

And this conjecture leads me to the consideration of another matter of very serious importance. It is well known that the great advantage, which the armies of France have over those they contend with, lies in the superiority with which their artillery is served, and in the skill of their engineers. Let me entreat, therefore, that the most prompt and pointed attention be given to the procuring and instructing of men in these sciences. Lamentable, indeed, must be our case, if we shall have to acquire the knowledge of these arts in the face of an enemy, when that enemy ought to experience our skill in the exercise of them. I do not mean to recommend characters as instructors in these branches, but I will mention the names of some, who have passed through my mind, and have been recalled to it; Duportail, Lamoy, Senf, Rivardi,

and Latrobe. Of the last I know nothing, but have been told, that he professes to be well acquainted with the *principles* of engineering. I notice these as persons within your reach, in case nothing better can be done. It is necessary to be provident. Let us not have things to prepare, when they should be in use.

To enable me to carry your request into execution, I ought to be informed, who of the Virginia arrangement have accepted their appointments, who have refused, and who have received no answer from you. Many, whose expectations were not answered in the last organization, and on that account declined, might be gratified on the present occasion with propriety, possibly from necessity. With respect, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 6 June, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I refer you to my letter of the 13th ultimo for the reasons, which prevented my having a personal knowledge of such characters in Virginia, as may be proper to be selected for officers in the eventual or provisional army; having shown therein the difficulties, which would arise from the extent of this State, and that, in order to obtain the necessary information, I must solicit the aid of others in whom confidence could be placed. I enclose to you an extract from a letter I have received from General Marshall, and of one from General Lee, in answer to letters I had written to them on this subject. From these you will see, that I can have but little hope of aid from those quarters. And as, in your letter of the 19th ultimo, you have

stated the objections to a public official advertisement for bringing forward such characters as might wish to obtain commissions, I shall still pursue the object in such a manner as I conceive best calculated to answer the purpose, notwithstanding the delicacy of the task, which, as I hinted to you in my letter above mentioned, I shall be obliged to impose on others; as well as the unpleasant situation into which I may myself be brought by raising expectations, which may not be realized.

When I mentioned in my last the names of several persons acquainted with engineering, I did not mean, as I then observed, to *recommend* them; but spoke of them merely as passing through my mind. At any rate, I should think it improper to employ a Frenchman in that important station at this time.

By a letter, which I lately received from General Pinckney, I have reason to believe that Colonel Senf would accept the appointment you mention; but whether he possesses all the requisites and qualifications, necessary for a person at the head of the corps of engineers, would be first proper to be ascertained. And would it not, also, be well to know if Major Rivardi, who is now in the service, and who is said to have been educated particularly for this branch, is not as well qualified as Senf? And if so, should he not have a preference, as being already in the service? I know nothing of the comparative merits or qualifications of these gentlemen, and have no particular partiality for the one or the other. I merely suggest these things for your consideration, knowing how highly important it is to have the best qualified men we can get in this line.

The enclosed letters, containing applications for appointments to fill such offices as may become vacant

in the present establishment from non-acceptance or resignation, I have thought proper to transmit to you. Such as may come to my hands for appointments in the Provisional Army I shall retain until the selection of officers for that army shall be made from this State.

The letter from Major George Lewis shows his disappointment, in not having had his name brought forward at an earlier day. He did not apply to me at that time, because he knew that I had always felt a delicacy in bringing into public office any of my own relations. I confess, however, that I regretted not seeing his name on the list, which was laid before the general officers in Philadelphia; for I knew him to be a valuable officer, and believed that he had a predilection for the service. In justice to his application I must say, that I think he deserves attention. He served with reputation in the revolutionary war, and commenced the oldest captain in Colonel Baylor's regiment of cavalry, but, marrying, resigned before the close of it. On the western expedition he commanded the Virginia cavalry, with the rank of major, and acquitted himself with honor. His age and standing in society qualify him for the appointment which he asks. He makes no claims on the score of preëminent or superior abilities; but he is known to possess a soundness of judgment, qualifications, and acquirements, at least equal to the place which he wishes; and no man stands higher than he does in the esteem of those who know him, or as a firm and steady friend to government.

Doctor Wellford ranks high in his profession; and his character as a friend to the government and a man of integrity is, I believe, unimpeachable. He acted as director of the medical department on the western expedition, and gave great satisfaction. It may be

proper to state, that he is a native of Great Britain, and came to this country with the army during the revolutionary war. That service he quitted, and settled in Fredericksburg, where he married into one of the most respectable families in that quarter, and has resided there ever since.

I perceive by the list which you sent to me of the officers in this State, who had accepted or declined their appointments, that the name of Captain Thomas Turner was among the latter. I have lately seen this gentleman, who informs me, that, having a strong predilection for the cavalry, he had applied for an appointment in that corps, and that he had declined his appointment in the infantry, because he was not acquainted with its duties, and had no turn for that kind of service. I see also by the aforesaid list, that there was one of the captaincies in the cavalry vacant. If this is not yet filled, I think, from the character I have heard of Captain Turner, he would supply that place with credit. At any rate, I presume it will be supplied with an officer from this State, as the troop is to be raised here. With due respect and consideration, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 19 June, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I am very glad to learn that the recruiting business, so far as it has been put in operation, succeeds agreeably to your wishes. It has commenced in Virginia, and I am informed that, in this vicinity (I have no intelligence from the more distant parts of the State) its progress is very flattering. A supply of clothing

would, however, promote this service even hereabouts; and, unless it is furnished soon, I am apprehensive it will languish, if not stop entirely.

I understand by a letter, which I received a few days since from General Pinckney, that the selection of officers from North and South Carolina and Georgia has been transmitted to the war office. I hope, on every account, there will be no delay in completing this arrangement. The disposition which you have made of the artillery regiment is, I have no doubt, just and proper, and calculated to promote the good of the service.

I thank you for the information from Mr. King. I have long believed that France owes the facility of her conquests more to the jealousy and want of cordial coöperation among the powers of Europe, whose interest it is to check her desolating ravages, than to any exertions of her own, great as they have been. It appears from every account (although there is none so full and distinct as I could wish), that her armies have not only been checked, but obliged to retreat. And her internal affairs do not seem to be in the best situation. Should these advantages be properly improved, I think the happiest effects may result from them. With very sincere regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

* *From General Hamilton's Letter.* — "A letter from Mr. King contains this unpleasant intelligence. The publication of the treaty of Campo Formio by the Directory, will injure the affairs of the Emperor. It will increase the jealousy of the King of Prussia, and of the empire; whose safety and interests were too little in view in that treaty. There is no end to the folly of the potentates, who are arrayed against France. We impatiently expect further accounts of the operations of the Archduke, and entertain a strong hope, that his genius and energy will turn to good account the advantage he has gained." — *New York, June 7th.*

TO ARCHIBALD BLAIR.

Mount Vernon, 24 June, 1799.

SIR,

Your favor of the 19th instant, enclosing the copy of a letter from our deceased friend Patrick Henry to you, dated the 8th of January last, came duly to hand. For this instance of your polite attention to me, I pray you to accept my thanks, and an assurance that the latter shall find a distinguished place in my bureau of public papers.

At any time I should have received the account of this gentleman's death with sorrow.* In the present crisis of our public affairs, I have heard it with deep regret. But the ways of Providence are inscrutable, and not to be scanned by short-sighted man, whose duty is submission without repining at its decrees.

I had often heard of the political sentiments expressed in Mr. Henry's letter to you, and as often a wish that they were promulgated through the medium of the gazettes; the propriety or inexpediency of which measure none can decide more correctly than yourself. But, after what you have written to me, I feel it incumbent to inform you, that another copy of that letter has been either surreptitiously obtained, or fabricated, and more than probably is now in the press; for I was informed on the day preceding my receipt of your letter, that one was in the hands of a gentleman in this county (Fairfax), and that he had been asked, and it was supposed would have it printed.

My breast never harboured a suspicion, that Mr. Henry was unfriendly to me; although I had reason to believe that the same spirit, which was at work to

* Patrick Henry died on the 6th of June, at the age of sixty-three.

destroy all confidence in the public functionaries, was not less busy in poisoning private fountains, and sowing the seeds of distrust among men of the same political sentiments. Mr. Henry had given me the most unequivocal proof, whilst I had the honor to command the troops of the United States in their revolutionary struggle, that he was not to be worked upon by intriguers; and, not conscious that I had furnished any cause for it, I could not suppose that without a cause he had become my enemy since. This proof, contained in the letter to which you allude, is deposited among my files, but (for want of a proper receptacle for them, which I mean to erect), they are yet in packages.* When I shall be able to open them with convenience, I will furnish you with a copy of what passed between Mr. Henry and myself, in consequence of the attempt which was made by a party in Congress to supplant me in that command, since you think it is not to be found among his papers and wish to be possessed of it.

Your letter to me, Sir, required no apology, but has a just claim to the thanks and gratitude of one, who has the honor to be, your most obedient obliged humble servant.†

---

* The letter is printed among the papers relating to *Conway's Cabal*; see Vol. V. pp. 495, 512.

† See Mr. Blair's letter, and the letter to him from Patrick Henry, in the APPENDIX, No. XVIII.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 25 June, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

Your private letter of the 15th instant came duly to hand.* So far as my information extends, which by the by is very limited, the recruiting service in this State progresses beyond my expectation; but is retarded very considerably from the want of clothing; the ragged appearance of the recruits having a tendency to decrease rather than to excite enlistments.

---

* *General Hamilton's Letter.* — "Dear Sir; I wrote to you a few days since, chiefly to inform you of the progress of the measures respecting the recruiting service, and that the symptoms with regard to it were sufficiently promising. The accounts continue favorable. I have just received a letter from General Wilkinson, dated the 13th of April, in which he assures me that he will set out in the ensuing month for the seat of government. The interview with him will be useful. It strikes me forcibly, that it will be both right and expedient to advance this gentleman to the grade of major-general. He has been long steadily in service, and long a brigadier. This, in so considerable an extension of the military establishment, gives him a pretension to promotion.

"I am aware that some doubts have been entertained of him, and that his character, on certain sides, gives room for doubts. Yet he is at present in the service; is a man of more than ordinary talent, of courage and enterprise; has discovered upon various occasions a good zeal; has embraced military pursuits as a profession, and will naturally find his interest, as an ambitious man, in deserving the favor of the government; while he will be apt to become disgusted if neglected, and through disgust may be rendered really what he is now only suspected to be. Under such circumstances it seems to me good policy to avoid all just ground of discontent, and to make it the interest of the individual to pursue his duty. If you should be also of this opinion, I submit to your consideration, whether it would not be advisable to express it in a private letter to the Secretary of War. With great respect and affection, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c." — *New York, June 15th.*

A few weeks afterwards General Hamilton wrote a long letter on the same subject to President Adams, which is contained in WILKINSON'S *Memoirs*, Vol. I. p. 157.

I think with you, that policy dictates the expediency of promoting Brigadier Wilkinson to the rank of major-general, and will suggest the measure to the Secretary of War in a private communication. It would feed his ambition, soothe his vanity, and, by arresting discontent, produce the good effect you contemplate. But, in the appointment of this gentleman, regard must be had to some circumstances and dates, otherwise, by endeavouring to avoid Charybdis, we might run upon Scylla.

What I mean by this is, that the President may deem it expedient to take the next major-general from the eastern States, and again may recur to the former appointments of that grade in the Provisional Army, and further (if services in the revolutionary army are to be regarded) to a relative rank also in dating the commissions of the major-generals yet to be appointed.

If General Wilkinson should be promoted, it would be expected no doubt that the oldest lieutenant-colonel commandant should step into his shoes as brigadier; of course the oldest major of the old line would succeed to the vacancy occasioned thereby. Who these gentlemen are, and what are their characters, I know not. The measure deserves consideration.

I am always your affectionate, &c.*

* A copy of this letter, and also a copy of General Hamilton's on the subject of Wilkinson's promotion, were transmitted to the Secretary of War.

TO JOHN TRUMBULL.

Mount Vernon, 25 June, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 18th of September last, with the small box containing four pairs of prints, came safe to hand, but long after the date of the letter. Immediately upon the receipt of these, having forgotten the terms of the subscription, and not knowing, as you were absent, to whom the money was to be paid, I wrote to Governor Trumbull for information on this head, without obtaining further satisfaction, than that he thought it probable Mr. Anthony of Philadelphia was authorized by you to receive the amount. In consequence I addressed that gentleman, and shall immediately pay what is due from me.

I give you the trouble of this detail, because I should feel unpleasantly, if, after your marked politeness and attentions to me in this as in every other transaction, any tardiness should have appeared on my part in return for prints so valuable.

The two volumes put into your hands by Mr. West, for transmission to me, are the production of a Mr. Uvedale Price on the *Picturesque*; accompanied by a very polite letter, of which the enclosed is an acknowledgment to that gentleman, recommended to your care, with my best respects to Mr. West.*

* Mr. Price's work was entitled, "*Essays on the Picturesque, as compared with the Sublime and Beautiful; and on the Use of Studying Pictures for the Purpose of Improving real Landscape.*" Notwithstanding the compass of this title, the author's main object was to express his views of the art of landscape gardening and ornamental planting; an art in which Washington always took an interest, and which he practised at Mount Vernon as far as opportunity and circumstances would permit.

I was on the point of closing this letter, with my thanks for the favorable sentiments you have been pleased to express for me, and adding Mrs. Washington's compliments and best wishes thereto, when the mail from Philadelphia brought me your interesting letter of the 24th of March.

For the political information contained in it I feel grateful, as I always shall for the free and unreserved communication of your sentiments upon subjects so important in their nature and tendency. No well-informed and unprejudiced man, who has viewed with attention the conduct of the French government since the revolution in that country, can mistake its objects, or the tendency of the ambitious plans it is pursuing. Yet, strange as it may seem, a party among us, and a powerful one too, affect to believe that its measures are dictated by a principle of self-preservation; that the outrages of which the Directory are guilty proceed from dire necessity; that it wishes to be upon the most friendly terms with the President of the United States; that it will be the fault of the latter, if this is not the case; that the defensive measures, which this country has adopted, are not only unnecessary and expensive, but have a tendency to produce the evil, which to deprecate is mere pretence, because war with France, they say, is the wish of this government; that on the militia we should rest for our security; and that it will be time enough to call upon these, when the danger is imminent.

With these and such like ideas, attempted to be inculcated upon the public mind, while prejudices are not yet eradicated, with all the arts of sophistry, and no regard to truth or respect to characters public or private who happen to differ in politics, I leave you to decide on the probability of carrying such extensive

plans of defence as you have suggested in your last letter into operation, and in the short period you suppose may be allowed to accomplish it in.

The public mind has changed, and is yet changing every day, with respect to French principles. The people begin to see clearly, that the words and actions of the governing powers of that nation cannot be reconciled, and that hitherto they have been misled by words; that, while they were pursuing the shadow, they lost the substance. The late changes in the Congressional representation sufficiently evince this opinion; for, of the two sent from the State of Georgia one certainly, some say both, are Federal characters; of six from South Carolina, five are decidedly so; of ten from North Carolina, seven may be counted upon; and, of nineteen from Virginia, eight are certain, a ninth doubtful, and, but for some egregious mismanagement, eleven supporters of governmental measures would have been elected.

I mention these facts to show, that we are *progressing* to a better state of things, not that we are quite right yet. Time I hope will show us the necessity, or at least the propriety, of becoming so. God grant it, and soon.

It is unfortunate when men cannot or will not see danger at a distance; or, seeing it, are undetermined as to the means, which are necessary to avert or keep it afar off. I question whether the evil arising from the French getting possession of Louisiana and the Floridas would be *generally* seen, until felt; and yet no problem in Euclid is more evident, or susceptible of clearer demonstration. Not less difficult is it to make them believe, that offensive operations oftentimes are the surest, if not in some cases the only means of defence.

Mrs. Washington is grateful for your kind remembrance of her, and with Mrs. Lewis's (formerly your old acquaintance Nelly Custis) compliments and good wishes united, I am, with sentiments of the most perfect esteem and regard, dear Sir, &c.*

---

* Three days before the date of this letter, Mr. Jonathan Trumbull of Connecticut wrote as follows to General Washington.

"Dear Sir; I take much pleasure in complying with a request of my brother, John Trumbull, to communicate to you a copy of a political letter, which he has lately written to me from London. His project you will find is a great one. But, were the moral powers of our country equal to her physical force, so far from starting at the magnitude of the object, some of her sons I presume would not hesitate at an attempt to bring into effect the projected union of two countries, which nature has so nearly conjoined; and whose destinies and interests, we may fairly conjecture, must at some future period, and that not far distant perhaps, be very intimately connected together. Would to Heaven that the councils of our country were now influenced by that union of sentiment and will, which you and I so ardently wish. But Providence is wise and good, and will accomplish its designs in the best manner and in its own way.

"You may perhaps recollect, my dear Sir, that in some conversation of mine with you on the event of your resignation of the Presidency, or in some letter written to you on that subject, I expressed to you *my wish*, that no untoward events might take place, which should once more draw you from your beloved solitude and retirement, and *force* you again to assume the cares of government. The period then alluded to, and the necessity which I then contemplated might exist, I now begin to realize as fast approaching. Another election of a President is near at hand, and I have confidence in believing that, should your name again be brought up, with a view to that object, you will not disappoint the hopes and desires of the wise and good in every State, by refusing to come forward once more to the relief and support of your injured country. Need I apologize to you, Sir, for this hint? Or shall I frankly tell you, that this idea is not vaguely started by me, but is strongly prompted by the necessity of our situation, and may probably be pursued in earnest. For, unless some eminently prominent character shall be brought up to view on the occasion, the next election of President, I fear, will have a very ill-fated issue." — *Lebanon, June 22d.*

Similar sentiments were expressed in letters from other persons. No answer, nor any remarks on the subject by Washington, are found among his papers. — See SPARKS's *Life of Gouverneur Morris*, Vol. III. p. 123.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 7 July, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

I have duly received your private letter of the 29th ultimo with its enclosures. In my letter to General Hamilton, which has been before you, you find I have fully expressed my opinion on the expediency, regarding circumstances, of promoting General Wilkinson to the rank of major-general; and I am always willing to give publicity to any sentiment, which I have expressed in this way, if circumstances should require or render it proper. But, as the appointment of other officers of high rank has been made, not only without my recommendation, but even without my knowledge, I cannot see the necessity (much less after the intimations which appear in your letter to General Hamilton respecting this gentleman) of my writing an official letter on this subject. Permit me, moreover, to say, that it would seem as if, when doubts or difficulties present themselves, I am called upon to sanction the measures, and thereby take a responsibility upon myself; and in other cases, to which no blame may be attached, my opinions and inclinations are not consulted.*

In giving my ideas in this manner I do not mean, my dear Sir, to express any disgust because I have not been consulted on every military appointment;

* In reply to General Washington's letter of the 25th of June, respecting the promotion of General Wilkinson, the Secretary of War had written as follows. "I have but one observation to make. If the promotion contemplated is to be attempted, it will be proper, that the general should be recommended by you in an official form, that the subject may be laid before the President." — *June 29th.*

but to show, that there ought in my opinion to be consistency and uniformity observed in these matters.

I am very sorry that Colonel Howard and General Lloyd have declined making a selection of persons for officering the eventual army from Maryland. If my knowledge of characters in that State were equal to theirs, or to yours, I should not hesitate a moment in undertaking what you request; but the fact is, my acquaintance there is very limited, and I find I have already undertaken more in this State than I shall be able to accomplish to my own satisfaction, from the difficulties, which have been suggested in my former letters. Indeed it would be concealment not to declare, that I see no other mode of making the selection in so expanded a State as Virginia (on the principle of distribution according to population), than by having recourse to some such expedient as was suggested in a former letter of mine, in order to make the President's intentions generally known, and to give to all parts thereof an opportunity of making a tender of their military services; or by dividing the State into as many districts as there are regiments to be raised in it, and in each district to make choice of the most eligible character for the command thereof, authorizing him, either alone, or with the aid of his field-officers, to select the company officers for consideration.

The first of these modes you have objected to; and the second is not free from objections; but the fact is, that I have been so little in this State for the last twenty-five years, as to be utterly unable to accomplish your views without the aid of others; and those who could assist me most, having only a small interest therein, do not, for the reasons which I presume operated on Messrs. Howard and Lloyd, incline to commit themselves in such delicate business, where nothing they do is conclusive.

General Marshall, one of those whose aid I solicited, is gone to Kentucky. From General Lee, who discovered no promptness in the first instance to give any assistance, I have not since heard a syllable; and, with respect to General Morgan, his recommendations are confined to a very narrow circle. I shall, notwithstanding, continue my endeavours to carry your request into effect in this State, but can promise no favorable result from the present plan. With sincere esteem and regard, I am, my dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 12 August, 1799.

SIR,

I have duly received your letter of the 7th instant, enclosing recommendations in favor of Mr. James Glenn for a captaincy in the Provisional Army; and shall attend to your request to return this and similar papers, whenever the list from Virginia shall be completed. But, Sir, I must candidly acknowledge to you, that I see no prospect of completing the selection of officers from this State for the Provisional Army within any reasonable time, if at all, unless some other measure than that now pursued shall be adopted.

When, agreeably to your request, I assured you of my readiness to promote, so far as was in my power, the President's wish to select officers for the twenty-four regiments authorized to be raised, I very candidly stated to you the circumstances, which had prevented my having such personal knowledge of characters in this State, as would enable me to make a selection without the assistance of others; and, at the same time, submitted to your consideration, whether the

President's views might not be carried into effect with more facility and despatch by having his determination to appoint these officers made known in such a manner, as to give an opportunity to all, who were desirous of serving, to come forward with their pretensions; or whether proper characters for the command of the regiments should not be appointed in the several districts, and powers given to them, with the assistance of their majors (who should also be previously selected), to appoint the company officers of their respective regiments. For the rejection of the first of these propositions you have given me your reasons. To the second I do not recollect that I have had any reply.

I must, however, endeavour to impress you with the necessity of adopting some other mode for officering those regiments, at least in this State, than that which has been pursued, if it is intended that the officers shall be appointed before the meeting of Congress; for, with all my endeavours to obtain information respecting characters who are fit and willing to serve, I find that very few indeed have been brought forward, and those only from particular places. Immediately upon receiving your request to aid in this business, I wrote to several influential and confidential characters, requesting them to furnish me with the names of such persons, within their districts or the sphere of their acquaintance, as were qualified and would be willing to accept appointments. From these sources I have obtained but little information. Colonel Cropper, of the Eastern Shore, has signified to me his willingness to accept the command of a regiment, and has promised to furnish a list of names for other offices; but his selection will be limited to a few counties, or at most to one district. I have also given

every encouragement in my power to others to come forward with recommendations or offers of service, but without effect. And, indeed, it can hardly be expected, that persons would interest themselves in pointing out characters for offices, unless there was a degree of certainty that they would be appointed. I shall, however, continue my endeavours to comply with your wishes in the way you desire, unless some other mode should be adopted. With due consideration I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 14 September, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

I feel much obliged and accordingly thank you for ordering me two months' pay, and I shall not suffer false modesty to assert, that my finances stand in no need of it; because it is not the time, nor the attention only, which the *public duties* I am engaged in require, but their bringing upon me applicants, recommenders of applicants, and seekers of information, none of whom perhaps are my acquaintances, with their servants and horses to aid in the consumption of my forage, and what to me is more valuable, my time, that I most regard; for a man in the country, nine miles from any house of entertainment, is differently situated from one in a city, where none of these inconveniences are felt.

Yet even under these circumstances, which may be little known to those who would appreciate them, and would be totally disregarded by such as are always on the look-out for something to cavil at, I am resolved

to draw nothing from the public but reimbursements of *actual* expenditures; unless by being called into the field I should be entitled to full pay and the emoluments of office.

Without this it would be said by the latter description of people, that I was enjoying retirement on very easy and lucrative terms; whilst the former might remark, that I had forgotten the conditions on which I accepted my commission.

I thought this explanation of my motives, for declining the acceptance of your offer, was due to your kind intention in behalf of, dear Sir, &c.

TO JAMES MCHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 15 September, 1799.

SIR,

Your letter of the 3d instant, with the papers accompanying it, did not get to my hands till the 11th. At the same time I received a long letter from General Hamilton, with voluminous references, to which he requested my immediate attention, and the communication of my sentiments thereon. These circumstances will account for your not having received an answer before this time.

The rules, which have been adopted by the President of the United States relative to rank in the army, point out the mode, which must determine the relative rank of those officers, who have heretofore been in service. The documents in the war-office, and the information obtained from the parties, would enable you to fix the rank of those officers, at least as well as I can do it. But to manifest my readiness to comply, so far as is in my power, with any request from

your department, I have in the enclosed list noted numerically the names of the lieutenant-colonels and majors, who have been in service, as they should rank, agreeably to the documents from the war-office, which you forwarded to me, annexed to their names, and in conformity with the regulations established by the President relative to rank.

By these rules resignation precludes all *claim* to rank, and places the party on a footing with those officers, who have never before been in service; but, where a resignation took place from any cause not affecting the character of the officer (as it is presumed is the case with all who are now appointed under this circumstance), it does not, in my opinion, deprive the party of that consideration, which his having been in service would give, provided he stands on equal ground, in other respects, with those who have never served.

As the relative rank of officers, who have not been in service, is to be determined by the Commander-in-chief, I shall make the arrangement in the best manner I can, with respect to the officers in your list who are of this description. But, in order to do this with propriety and satisfaction, a personal knowledge of the several officers, or full information of their respective qualifications, talents, and merits, is necessary. The former I do not possess. The latter I have, respecting most of those who have not been in service, so far as could be ascertained from the documents laid before the general officers in November last from the war-office. But to proceed on this ground alone, and without any document relative to the characters of the officers from Connecticut, North and South Carolina, and Georgia, (who, you will recollect, were selected without any agency of mine,) and fix the rank

definitively, would be very repugnant to my ideas of propriety and justice. In a word, it would be little better than to decide their relative rank by lot. I have tried and tried again to make an arrangement of the majors, who have been in service, and I enclose a list of the result; but it is so unsatisfactory to myself, that I request no weight may be given to it, farther than it accords with better information and circumstances.

In your letter you have requested, that the relative rank of the field-officers of the cavalry, as well as of the twelve regiments of infantry, should be fixed; but you have not furnished the names of those officers; and there is one major wanting, according to your list, to complete the number for the twelve regiments of infantry.

I feel much obliged by your intention of remitting to me two months' pay; but, excepting in cases which may involve me in pecuniary expenses, I must beg leave, on the principle I set out with, to decline the acceptance of it. With due consideration, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 15 September, 1799

DEAR SIR,

Mrs. Washington's indisposition, and other circumstances, would not allow me to give your letter of the 9th instant, and the reports and journals which accompanied it, an earlier consideration. Having done this, however, with as much thought as I have been able to bestow, under the circumstances mentioned, I

see no cause (with the limited force which has been enumerated, and which I presume is all that can be calculated upon,) to differ from you in the disposition of it. Although at the same time I shall make some observations thereupon for consideration.

It may be remembered, that, at the time the Secretary of War laid before the general officers in Philadelphia the letters of General Wilkinson, respecting the propriety in his judgment of placing a considerable force at the Natchez, I gave it my decided disapprobation; inasmuch as it would excite in the Spaniards distrust and jealousy of our pacific disposition; would cause an augmentation of force on *their* part; and so on with both, if our government should go into the measure; until the thing which was intended to be avoided would more than probably be produced, that is, hostility. Whereas by keeping that force in the upper country, besides its looking to *all* points, and exciting no alarm in any, it might, if occasion should require it either for defence or offence, descend the stream with all its munitions and equipments; which could be accumulated with ease, and without noise, at the upper posts, and make the surprise more complete.

Although I have said, in effect, that the *corps de reserve*, or army of observation, should take post at the place you have mentioned, namely, in the vicinity of the Rapids of the Ohio, (Louisville,) yet I can see but two reasons which entitle it to be preferred to the *present post* above, at Fort Washington, in a geographical point of view. And these are, that there is no water above the former, that can float large vessels at all seasons; and that, by being so much lower down, the passage of the Ohio would be facilitated if an expedition should descend the Mississippi. In other respects the latter, in my opinion, has the advantage.

First, because it is a post already established, and would incur no additional expense. Secondly, because it is more contiguous to Fort Wayne, Detroit, Michilimackinac, and all the Indians on the Lakes, from whom in that quarter we have most danger to apprehend. Thirdly, because communications with it, for the most part by water, are already established. And, fourthly, in case of insurrections above or below, it is equally as well if not better situated.

Were it not that the Wabash empties itself into the Ohio so low down, and yet above its confluence with the Cumberland and Tennessee, I should be inclined to give a position near the mouth of the Wabash the preference over either the Rapids or Fort Washington, because it would command a great water inlet towards the Lakes.

But whether the position for the *corps de reserve* be chosen at the Rapids of the Ohio, above or below, it had better, I conceive, be on the north side of the Ohio, than within the State of Kentucky; thereby impeding more the intercourse between the army and the citizens, and guarding against the evils, which result from that mixture and too much familiarity.

I am so far from agreeing with General Wilkinson, that Fort Wayne ought to be abolished, that, if I mistake not the place, central between the heads of the Miamis of Lake Erie and the Ohio, the St. Joseph and the Wabash, affording good water transportation, with small portages in every direction, I should pronounce it, were it not for the expense of subsisting troops there, the most eligible position for the army of observation of any in that country. It would be an effectual security against all the Indians, who could annoy us in that region; it would cover our barrier posts on the line between the British and us; and

troops from thence might descend rapidly into the Mississippi by the Wabash.

General Wilkinson, in speaking of posts along our southern frontier, is general; and you only notice Fort Stoddert. But, on an inspection of the maps, a place presents itself to my view as very eligible to occupy, provided the Creek Indians would consent to it. I mean the Appalachicola, at its confluence with Flint River, where the line of demarkation strikes it.

But, in my opinion, if we had or could obtain an engineer of real skill, and attached to the true policy and interest of the United States, he ought to devote his whole time to the investigation of our interior country, and mark and erect its proper defences; for these hitherto have been more the work of chance and local consideration, than national design.

If the harbour of Presque Isle is good, I should think a small garrison ought to be retained there. It certainly is the best on the American side of Lake Erie, and one there is important. But I see very little use for a sergeant and eight privates at Fort Knox. It is either unnecessary, or too small; and sergeants at a distance rarely conduct well, when they have not the eye of an officer to inspect their conduct.

There are several references in General Wilkinson's report, which were not sent. By his statement of the mutilated condition of the troops, and present disposition of them, there must have been most horrible mismanagement somewhere. A corrective is, indeed, highly necessary. The practice of furloughing officers, and then renewing the furloughs from time to time, is extremely injurious to the service, and ought to be discontinued on ordinary occasions. And that of frittering the army into small garrisons is, if possible, worse. It will never be respectable while these evils exist;

and until it can be more concentrated, and the garrisons frequently relieved by detachments from the main body, discipline will always be lax, and impositions on the public will prevail.

If the British are resolved to keep up armed vessels on the Lakes, I presume it will be expedient for us to do the same; but in time of peace a better way, in my opinion, is for neither to have any. In case of a rupture, or the appearance of one, with that nation, there can be no doubt of our arming on those waters much more expeditiously than they would be able to do.

I have now gone over the material points in your letter and General Wilkinson's report; but, as I mentioned before, it has been done under circumstances unfavorable to minute investigation or mature deliberation, and my sentiments, where differing from you, are given more for consideration than decision. Should any thing of importance on this subject, not noticed here, occur to me, I shall not fail to communicate it to you; for the measures now taken with respect to guarding our frontiers and interior country ought to be such, as will be permanent and respectable. With very great regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 29 September, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

There being no person in my view more eligible than Colonel Parker to carry your instructions into effect, unless Colonel Carrington had been in office as quartermaster-general, I had no hesitation in for-

warding your letter to him, with such sentiments as occurred to me on the subject, which differed in no essential point from those you had given.

I confined him more pointedly than you had done to the site near Harper's Ferry for his winter cantonment, because very cogent reasons in my opinion required it. Besides possessing all the advantages enumerated in your letter to him, as far as my recollection of the spot and information go, it being in a fertile and most abounding country, and one of the strongest positions by nature perhaps in America, it appeared to me that the encampment and arsenal, which are established at that place, might naturally assist and benefit each other.

If the States are wise enough to keep united, I have no doubt of this arsenal being their principal place of arms and best foundery. It is in the midst of furnaces and forges of the best iron, can receive at and transport from it by inland navigation all its supplies and manufactures in every direction, and is indubitably, supposing the advantage of water transportation out of the question altogether, the great highway to the country on the Ohio River.

For the reasons I have assigned, I did not hesitate a moment in giving the vicinity of Harper's Ferry, at the confluence of the rivers Potomac and Shenandoah, a decided preference. But, if I am not mistaken, another strong inducement is afforded, namely, that there is a sufficiency of land, purchased for the purpose of the arsenal, to accommodate both objects. Of this I have informed Colonel Parker; but, as Mr. Lear is from home, who was the agent for the war department in the purchase, I could not inform him with certainty. If the fact, however, should be as I suspect, it will prove a most fortunate circumstance, as well in the

article of expense, as in the time that will be gained in completing the huts. If it should be otherwise, I have advised Colonel Parker to hold out to view and examine many places, while he by some agent is endeavouring to possess himself by purchase of the site near Harper's Ferry. With very great esteem and regard, I remain, dear Sir, &c.

TO WILLIAM VANS MURRAY.

Mount Vernon, 26 October, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

Within a few days I have been favored with your letter of the 26th of July, and a duplicate of one of the 7th of April. For the information in these, and for your kindness in sending me a sketch of the water-throwing mill, I feel much obliged, and thank you for the trouble you have been at in making the drawing of it; being persuaded of its utility, although, advanced as I am, and engaged in other pursuits, I shall not be able to avail myself of it. Others, however, may, and I shall take care to make it known on all proper occasions.

The affairs of Europe have taken a most important and interesting turn. What will be the final result of the uninterrupted successes of the combined army, is not for a man at the distance of three thousand miles from the great theatre of action to predict; but he may wish, and ardently wish from principles of humanity, and for the benevolent purpose of putting a stop to the further effusion of human blood, that the successful powers may know at what point to give cessation to the sword for negotiation. It is not uncommon, however, in prosperous gales, to forget that

adverse winds may blow. Such *was* the case with France. Such may be the case with the coalesced powers against her. A by-stander sees more of the game generally, than those who are playing it. So neutral nations may be better enabled to draw a line between the contending parties, than those who are actors in the war. My own wish is, to see every thing settled upon the best and surest foundation for the peace and happiness of mankind, without regard to this, that, or the other nation. A more destructive sword never was drawn, at least in modern times, than this war has produced. It is time to sheathe it, and give peace to mankind.

You are going to be employed in an important and delicate negotiation, for the success of which in all its relations no one more ardently and sincerely wishes than I do. Your colleagues in this business will be able to give you such accurate details of the internal concerns of our country, as to render any attempts of mine to do it not only nugatory, but injudicious; for which reason I shall refer you to them for the state of our political prospects.

I most devoutly wish, that the cogent, indeed unanswerable reasons you urged to dissuade our friend from visiting the United States in the present crisis of our affairs, may have prevailed.* The measure would in my judgment be injudicious in every point of view in which it can be placed; embarrassing to himself, embarrassing to his friends, and possibly embarrassing to the government in the result. His final decision,

* The "friend" here alluded to was Lafayette. The hostile attitude of France and the United States at this time towards each other, and the part he must necessarily take if he came to America, were the embarrassments apprehended. It was rumored, likewise, that he was coming as minister from the French Republic.

however, must have been made before this time, and I shall add nothing more on this head, nor indeed, for the reasons already assigned, on any other. With sincere and affectionate regard, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 26 October, 1799.

SIR,

I have duly received your letter of the 21st instant, enclosing a letter for Colonel Parker, which I have forwarded to him, and at the same time repeated my instructions for *hutting* the troops, in conformity with the idea which you originally suggested.

I presume that the impression made on your mind by Colonel Parker's letter, respecting winter-quarters for the three regiments, must have been erroneous. At the time when I received and transmitted your first letter to Colonel Parker on this subject, Mr. Lear was in Berkeley; and, as he was well acquainted with the public ground at Harper's Ferry, and other situations in the vicinity of it, he informs me that Colonel Parker requested he would accompany him to that place, and give him any information and assistance in his power towards carrying into effect the orders for hutting the troops. This was readily complied with; and, upon an examination of the public ground, and making the necessary inquiries, it was determined, that no situation in the vicinity of Harper's Ferry, even if it could have been obtained, was so eligible as that belonging to the United States. Colonel Parker, therefore, fixed upon a spot, which appeared, on every account, the most convenient for hutting, and determined that the huts, which were to be built by the soldiers,

should be each sixteen feet square (to contain twelve men,) made of rough logs, and covered with slabs, which would be much cheaper than plank or boards. As the timber, which could be had from the public ground, might not be sufficient for more than one half the huts, Colonel Parker requested Mr. Mackey, agent for the war department at Harper's Ferry, to make the necessary inquiries and engagements for procuring such further quantity of logs and slabs as might be wanting. His motive for engaging Mr. Mackey in the business was, that, as he had been in the habit of procuring articles for the public use in that part of the country, he could do it to more advantage than any other person, and his inquiries for them would not be so likely to raise the price as would those of another agent. Had any other place been fixed upon for hutting the troops, the purchase of timber and fuel would have been as necessary as at this, and in no situation proper for the troops could they have been procured cheaper.

From the foregoing account, which is given to me by Mr. Lear (to whom Colonel Parker referred me for particular information respecting the arrangements he had made for hutting the troops), you will see that barracks were not contemplated by Colonel Parker, and that the huts were to be built in as economical a manner as could be expected. I have, however, as I observed before, repeated my instructions to Colonel Parker, that the troops should be hutted in the manner they were in the late war, which he must well recollect.

Presuming that the plan of barracks has never been substituted by Colonel Parker for that of huts, it is, in my opinion, unnecessary to make any arrangements for quartering the ninth and tenth regiments in the

places which you suggest, namely, at Frederictown and Carlisle. From the view, which I had of the barracks at the latter place in the year 1794, I am convinced, that the expense of repairing them fit for the soldiers during the winter would be much greater than that of building huts. What the situation of the barracks at Frederictown is, I am unable to say; but I presume they are not much, if any, better than those at Carlisle. And, at any rate, this dispersed situation of the troops would defeat a primary and important object. I mean that of having them in one body, where they can be under the eye of a general officer, and where the disciplining and training of the soldiers can be much better effected, than if they were in detached corps.

From the information of a gentleman lately from Winchester, I have reason to believe, that Colonel Parker's regiment is at Harper's Ferry before this time; and I think no time should be lost in ordering the other regiments to the same place; for there cannot be a doubt, from the circumstances mentioned in this letter, that Colonel Parker has taken measures for hutting the troops there agreeably to our original idea; and, as the soldiers will build their own huts, it is necessary they should begin them as soon as possible.

I cannot close this letter without mentioning, that I have heard of repeated complaints for want of money to pay the troops raised in this quarter, as well as for other purposes relating to them. If these complaints are well founded, you know as well as I do the evils, which must result from such defect; and I cannot but be astonished at it, when it is well known, that appropriations are made for the pay and support of the troops, and the money is undoubtedly in the

treasury. I would wish you to inquire into the matter; and, if the complaints are just, it would be well to know from whence proceeds the inattention or deficiency. With very great esteem and regard, I am, Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 27 October, 1799.

SIR,

Since writing the enclosed letter to you yesterday, I have received a letter from Colonel Parker, and one from Mr. Mackey, agent for the war department at Harper's Ferry, stating the impracticability of procuring plank sufficient for covering the huts intended to be built for the regiments at Harper's Ferry.

In consequence of this information, I have again written to Colonel Parker under this date by express, conforming my instructions, respecting winter-quarters for the troops, to the present state of things. I enclose a copy of my letter to him of this date, as well as that of yesterday, which will exhibit a full view of the business, and enable you to give any additional instructions you may think proper directly to Colonel Parker.

Although I had determined to take no charge of any military operations, unless the troops should be called into the field, yet, under the present circumstances, and considering that the advanced season of the year will admit of no delay in providing winter-quarters for the troops, I have willingly given my aid in this business, and shall never decline any assistance in my power, *when necessary*, to promote the good of the service.

On the first view, I supposed that the regiment in this State, commanded by Colonel Bentley, was included in the three to be stationed at Harper's Ferry. I find, however, that it is not. What provision is made for the winter-quarters of that regiment? I have not said any thing to Colonel Parker, respecting compensation or reimbursement of the expenses he may incur by attending to the quarters for the other regiments, if they are separated from his. On this subject you will be pleased to write to him, if necessary. With very great regard and esteem, I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 27 October, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

To my official letter I refer you for my communication with Colonel Parker. I have no conception, however, that such difficulties as are enumerated in his and Mr. Mackey's letter can exist in the erection of simple huts, such as served us last war; and so I am about to inform Colonel Parker.

I am averse to the separation of the eighth, ninth, and tenth regiments, under any circumstances which exist at present, and still more so to the distribution of them into *three States.* If they cannot all be accommodated at Harper's Ferry, the barracks at Fredericktown, if sufficient to contain two regiments, are to be preferred vastly to Carlisle, because they are only twenty miles from the arsenal, which is in great forwardness at the first place, and because fuel alone at either Fredericktown or Carlisle, for the winter, would double the expense of the establishment at

Harper's Ferry. I have gone thus far into this business, and have given these opinions, because you desired it, and because, from the peculiar situation of things, it seemed in a manner almost indispensable. But I wish exceedingly, that the state of Mrs. Pinckney's health, and other circumstances, would permit General Pinckney to come forward, and on his own view to decide on matters. To engage partially in military arrangements is not only contrary to my original design, but unpleasant in its nature and operation, inasmuch as it incurs responsibility without proper means for decision.

The purport of your private letter of the 21st, with respect to a late decision, has surprised me exceedingly. I was surprised at the *measure*; how much more so at the manner of it! This business seems to have commenced in an evil hour, and under unfavorable auspices. I wish mischief may not tread in all its steps, and be the final result of the measure. A wide door was open, through which a retreat might have been made from the first *faux pas*, the shutting of which, to those who are not behind the curtain, and are as little acquainted with the secrets of the cabinet as I am, is, from the present aspect of European affairs, quite incomprehensible. But I have the same reliance on Providence, which you express, and trust that matters will *end well*, however unfavorable they may appear at present. With very great esteem, I am, &c.

TO JAMES M'HENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Mount Vernon, 5 November, 1799.

SIR,

At the earnest request of General Hamilton, that I would give instructions for having the eighth, ninth, and tenth regiments of infantry provided with winter-quarters, which it was very desirable should be at Harper's Ferry, I have departed from the resolution which I had formed, not to take charge of any military operations unless the army should be called into the field, so far as to order the best arrangements to be made, that circumstances would permit at this advanced season of the year, for quartering those regiments; knowing that no time should be lost, and that the distance of General Hamilton from this part of the country would occasion considerable delay in the necessary communications, and that the situation of General Pinckney's family must prevent his personal attention to the business.

I therefore ordered Colonel Parker, of the eighth regiment, to make the necessary arrangements for hutting these troops on the public ground at Harper's Ferry; but in the course of my communications with him on the subject, I found that without great exertion it was probable that quarters would not be provided at that place for more than one regiment. I therefore thought it proper, in addition to my further instructions to Colonel Parker, to send my secretary, Colonel Lear, up to Harper's Ferry, who would communicate to him my wishes more fully than could be done by writing, and who was directed to give to Colonel Parker all the assistance in his power, that the business might be determined without delay. This has been done, and I now enclose to you a copy of the

report, which my secretary has made to me on his return; by which you will see the definitive arrangement, which has been made, and which meets my approbation.

You will be so good as to communicate this report to General Hamilton, or General Pinckney, or both, that they may see what steps have been taken for quartering those regiments, and make their arrangements accordingly.

I think that the ground mentioned in this report will be very useful to the United States, and is certainly valuable for the timber and fuel; and, if more can be had on the same terms, I am of opinion that it ought to be purchased for the public, as the works now preparing, as well as those which may be hereafter established at Harper's Ferry, will make it an important place to the United States, and an extension of their ground will be desirable on many accounts. You will be pleased to observe, however, that the present purchase of one hundred and fifty acres is not in fee; it is but the purchase of a lease, which has upwards of fifty years to run, at an annual rent of twenty dollars per hundred acres. There can be little doubt, however, but that the fee may be obtained on reasonable terms. At any rate, you will be pleased to have the present bargain confirmed, and a provision ordered for the payment of the money. With due consideration, I have the honor to be, Sir, &c.

TO JAMES McHENRY, SECRETARY OF WAR.

Private.

Mount Vernon, 17 November, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your confidential and interesting letter of the 10th instant came duly and safely to hand; with the contents of which I have been stricken dumb; and I believe it is better that I should remain mute than express any sentiment on the important matters, which are related therein.

I have, some time past, viewed the political concerns of the United States with an anxious and painful eye. They appear to me to be moving by hasty strides to a crisis; but in what it will result, that Being, who sees, foresees, and directs all things, alone can tell. The vessel is afloat, or very nearly so, and considering myself as a passenger only, I shall trust to the mariners, (whose duty it is to watch,) to steer it into a safe port.*

The charge of British influence, in the appointment of Major Pinckney to be minister at the court of

---

* In writing to Mr. Pickering, a few days before, he had expressed himself as follows, in regard to the mission proposed to be sent to France.

"As men will view the same thing in different lights, I would now fain hope, that the President has caught the true one, and that good will come from the mission, which is about to depart. These are my wishes, and no one is more ardent in them; but I see nothing in the present aspect of European affairs, on which to build them, nor any possible evil, under the same circumstances, which could result from delay. But as the measure is resolved on, I trust as you do, that that Providence, which has directed all our steps hitherto, will continue to direct them to the consummation of our prosperity and happiness."— *November 3d.*

Mr. Pickering's letter, to which this extract is in part an answer, is contained in the APPENDIX, No. XXI.

London, is a perfect enigma. My curiosity leads me to inquire on what ground it is built, and you would oblige me by giving an explanation. Was it the measure or the man, that gave rise to this insinuation? The first it cannot be, because an exchange of ministers had long been invited, sought after, and the tardiness of Great Britain, in not meeting the advances of the United States in this respect, was considered and complained of as an indignity. Could it be the man? Could he, who had fought against that country, and bled in defence of his own in the conflict, a man of acknowledged abilities and irreproachable character, be suspected of undue influence? If neither, I ask again on what is the accusation founded? The whole is a mystery to me. Merely to satisfy my curiosity, I wish to have it unriddled; and not, from the present view I have of the subject, because I shall think myself bound to answer any interrogatories, which may be dictated by insidious impertinence. With the greatest esteem, I am, &c.*

TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON, MAJOR-GENERAL.

Mount Vernon, 12 December, 1799.†

SIR,

I have duly received your letter of the 28th ultimo, enclosing a copy of what you had written to the Secretary of War on the subject of a military academy.

The establishment of an institution of this kind, upon a respectable and extensive basis, has ever been considered by me as an object of primary importance

* See Mr. McHenry's letter, to which this is an answer, in the APPENDIX, No. XXI.

† General Washington died two days after the date of this letter.

to this country; and, while I was in the chair of government, I omitted no proper opportunity of recommending it, in my public speeches and otherwise, to the attention of the legislature. But I never undertook to go into a detail of the organization of such an academy; leaving this task to others, whose pursuit in the path of science, and attention to the arrangement of such institutions, had better qualified them for the execution of it. For the same reason I must now decline making any observations on the details of your plan; and, as it has already been submitted to the Secretary of War, through whom it will naturally be laid before Congress, it might be too late for alterations, if any should be suggested.

I sincerely hope, that the subject will meet with due attention, and that the reasons for its establishment, which you have so clearly pointed out in your letter to the Secretary, will prevail upon the legislature to place it upon a permanent and respectable footing. With very great esteem and regard, I am, &c.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

No. I. p. 19.

SUGGESTIONS FOR ESTABLISHING A COLLEGE, TO BE SUPPLIED WITH PROFESSORS FROM EUROPE.

THOMAS JEFFERSON TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Monticello, 23 February, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

You were formerly deliberating on the purpose to which you should apply the shares in the Potomac and James River Companies, presented to you by our Assembly, and you did me the honor of asking me to think on the subject. As well as I remember, some academical institution was thought to offer the best application of the money. Should you have finally decided in favor of this, a circumstance has taken place, which would render the present moment the most advantageous to carry it into execution, by giving to it in the outset such an *éclat*, and such solid advantages, as would ensure a very general concourse to it of the youths from all our States, and probably from the other parts of America, which are free enough to adopt it. The revolution, which has taken place at Geneva, has demolished the college of that place, which was in a great measure supported by the former government. The colleges of Geneva and Edinburg were considered as the two eyes of Europe in matters of science, insomuch that no other pretended to any rivalship with either. Edinburg has been the most famous in medicine during the life of Cullen; but Geneva most so in the other branches of science, and much the most resorted to from the continent of Europe, because the French language was that which was used.

A Mr. D'Ivernois, a Genevan, and a man of science, known as the author of a history of that republic, has proposed the transplanting of that college in a body to America. He has written

to me on the subject, as he has also done to Mr. Adams, t was formerly known to us both, giving us the details of his for effecting it. Probably these have been communicated to by Mr. Adams, as D'Ivernois desired should be done; but, they should not have been communicated, I will take the li of doing it. His plan, I think, would go to about ten or t professorships. He names to me the following professors as ly, if not certain, to embrace the plan.

Mouchon, the present President, who wrote the Analytical for the Encyclopædists, which sufficiently proves his compr sive science.

Pictet, known from his admeasurement of a degree, and works, professor of Natural Philosophy.

His brother, said by M. D'Ivernois to be also great.

Senebier, author of Commentaries on Spallanzani, and of works in Natural Philosophy and Meteorology; also the trans of the Greek tragedians.

Bertrand and L'Huillier, both mathematicians, and said t inferior to nobody in that line, except La Grange, who is wi an equal.

Prévost, highly spoken of by D'Ivernois.

De Saussure, and his son, formerly a professor, but who lefi college to have more leisure to pursue his geological resea into the Alps, by which work he is very advantageously kn

Most of these are said to speak our language well. The n of Mouchon, Pictet, De Saussure, and Senebier are well kno me, as standing foremost among the literati of Europe. Se having been necessary, this plan had as yet been concerted with Pictet, his brother, and Prévost, who knew, however, circumstances, that the others would join them; and I thin very possible, that the revolution in France may have put our power to associate La Grange with them, whose modest diffident character will probably have kept him in the rear o revolutionary principles, which has been the ground on w the revolutionists of Geneva have discarded their professors. of these are men having families, and therefore M. D'Ive observes they cannot come over but on sure grounds. He poses a revenue of fifteen thousand dollars for the whole ins tion; and, supposing lands could be appropriated to this objec says that a hundred Genevan families can readily be found, will purchase and settle on the lands, and deposit for them capital of which fifteen thousand dollars would be the inte

In this revenue he means to comprehend a college of languages preparatory to the principal one of sciences, and also a third college for the gratuitous teaching of reading and writing to the poor.

It could not be expected, that any propositions from strangers unacquainted with our means, and our wants, could jump at once into a perfect accommodation with these. But those presented to us would serve to treat on, and are capable of modifications reconcilable perhaps to the views of both parties.

1. We can well dispense with his second and third colleges, the last being too partial for an extensive country, and the second sufficiently and better provided for already by our public and private grammar schools. I should conjecture, that this would reduce one third of his demand of revenue, and that ten thousand dollars would then probably answer their remaining views, which are the only important ones to us.

2. We are not to count on raising the money from lands, and consequently we must give up the proposal of the colony of Genevan farmers. But, the wealth of Geneva in money being notorious, and the class of moneyed men being that, which the new government are trying to get rid of, it is probable that a capital sum could be borrowed on the credit of the funds under consideration, sufficient to meet the first expenses of the transplantation and establishment, and to supply also the deficiency of revenue till the profits of the shares shall become sufficiently superior to the annual support of the college to repay the sums borrowed.

3. The composition of the academy cannot be settled there. It must be adapted to our circumstances, and can therefore only be fixed between them and persons here acquainted with those circumstances, and conferring for the purpose after their arrival here. For a country so marked for agriculture as ours, I should think no professorship so important as one not mentioned by them, a professor of agriculture, who, before the students should leave college, should carry them through a course of lectures on the principles and practice of agriculture; and that this professor should come from no country but England. Indeed I should mark Young as the man to be obtained. These, however, are modifications to be left till their arrival here.

M. D'Ivernois observes, that the professors keep themselves disengaged till the ensuing spring, waiting an answer. As he had desired his proposition to be made to our legislature, I accordingly got a member to sound as many of his brethren on the

subject as he could, desiring, if he found it would be des
that he would not commit the honor either of that body or
college of Geneva by forcing an open act of rejection.
ceived his information only a fortnight ago, that the thin
evidently impracticable. I immediately forwarded that inform
to D'Ivernois, not giving him an idea that there was any
resource. Thinking, however, that, if you should conclu
apply the revenues of the canal shares to any institution
kind, so fortunate an outset could never again be obtain
have supposed it my duty, both to you and them, to subm
circumstances to your consideration.

A question would arise, as to the place of the establish
As far as I can learn, it is thought just that the State,
gives the revenue, should be most considered in the uses to
it is appropriated. But I suppose that their expectations
be satisfied by a location within their limits, and that this
be so far from the Federal City as moral considerations
recommend, and yet near enough to it to be viewed as a
pendage of that, and that the splendor of the two objects
reflect usefully on each other.

Circumstances have already consumed much of the time al
us. Should you think the proposition can be brought at all
your views, your determination, as soon as more important
pations will admit of it, would require to be conveyed as
as possible to M. D'Ivernois now in London, lest my last
should throw the parties into other engagements. I will not
pass on your time and attention by adding to this lengthy
any thing further, than assurances of the high esteem and re
with which I have the honor to be, dear Sir, yours, &c.

THOMAS JEFFERS

No. II. p. 33.

NOTES SUBMITTED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE PRESIDENT IN REGARD TO THE BRITISH TREATY.*

The resolution of the Senate is to this import; That the Senate advise and consent to the ratification of the treaty, upon condition, that an article be added to it, which shall suspend so much of the twelfth article as respects the West India trade; and that the President be requested to open, without delay, further negotiation upon this head.

The expectation of the supporters of this resolution is, that the President will send to the Senate an article to this effect, drawn in form, and ask them whether they do assent to such an article, if it be inserted in the treaty; that, upon their saying that they will, the President will *now* ratify the treaty *provisionally*, and put it into the hands of his minister, with an instruction to exchange it for a similar treaty.

This subject cannot be taken into consideration by the President too early; as it involves some critical, delicate, and hazardous points.

1. If he sends an article ready drawn, it will be asked, Why did he do so? The answer is, that he was anxious to prevent delays in concluding the treaty. Does he mean to exhibit his approbation of the treaty *so strikingly?* Thus much is true, that, unless such a proposition should originate from him, it cannot originate from the Senate; because they have no right to make *independent* propositions upon an *executive* matter. I say *independent;* for I consider the proposition of a qualified ratification, as connected with their constitutional power over the treaty.

2. As a qualified ratification is a new thing in diplomatic history, so may our forms of proceeding be accommodated to the newness of our situation. Hence the President has on one occasion inquired of the Senate, whether they would ratify a treaty with a certain clause in it. But he has never yet gone so far, as to ask them *now* to approve a particular article, which he proposes, and *now*, beforehand, to approve a treaty which shall have

* The two following papers were submitted to the President by Mr. Randolph, Secretary of State. They bear no date, but were probably communicated about the 26th of June, 1795.

that article in it. It is true, that the Senate will see as now, as they can hereafter, what will be in the treaty. But regular course of proceeding being to have before them the which they are to confirm, it will be viewed by the world a excessive ardor to get at the treaty, were the President to leap the present forms by such a proposition.

3. Does he mean to ratify *now*, so as to render it unnece for the treaty to come back to *himself*, after the new suspen article is inserted? If he does, the propriety of putting a seal on an act before it is complete, or of delegating to an the power of seeing that it is complete, is, to say the least, doubtful. And if the President ought not to do this for hi ought he to apply to the Senate to do it for themselves?

4. The propriety of this proceeding will be determined b public, according to the effects intended to be produced. T will be clearly seen to be, to prevent a future Senate from r tiving the ratification, as they may do, if the question b settled now; and to cut off delay. Whether the latter is s portant as to counterbalance the impressions arising fron former, the President will determine.

5. Perhaps it will be incumbent upon the President to s himself on these two questions. First, Will he bind himself to ratify, upon the change being made in the West India a so that he cannot refuse to ratify, let other circumstances they will? Secondly, What kind of person, and who is employed in this new business?

QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED, IN ORDER THAT OPINIONS M GIVEN WHEN CALLED FOR.

1. Ought any letters, written from the department of sta ter it was morally certain that they could not reach Mr. Ja fore a treaty should be signed, to be laid before the Se Some of these letters criticize some things, which are ac found in the treaty.

2. Ought any letters, written by Mr. Jay in answer to a those objections, to be laid before the Senate?

3. If any of the letters mentioned in the second question explain a difficulty in the treaty, would it be well to select only, when the rest are withheld?

4. Suppose the Senate call for these letters, are they given up?

5. Suppose the Senate call for the instructions and corr

dence of Colonel Monroe, from a fancied association with the British treaty; are they to be given up?

6. Suppose the Senate should require the attendance of the Secretary of State, to explain generally what they may require; ought he to attend under any circumstances of this kind; or, if he should attend at all, ought not the inquiries to be made of him, to be previously specified in writing, in order that the President, under whose directions alone the Secretary acts, may understand the whole extent of the business beforehand?

7. Suppose the French minister should offer to the Secretary of State a memorial against the British treaty, and desire it to be transmitted to the Senate, is not the request to be refused?

8. What notice is to be taken of him, if he should present a like memorial to the Senate, or be known to endeavour to sway individual members, by representing the displeasure, or danger, from the French Republic?

No. III. p. 54.

EDMUND RANDOLPH'S RESIGNATION OF THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF STATE.

EDMUND RANDOLPH TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 19 August, 1795.

SIR,

Immediately upon leaving your house this morning, I went to the office of the department of State, where I directed the room in which I usually sat to be locked up, and the key to remain with the messenger. My object in this was to let all the papers rest as they stood.

Upon my return home, I reflected calmly and maturely upon the proceedings of this morning. Two facts immediately presented themselves; one of which was, that my usual hour of calling upon the President had not only been postponed for the opportunity of consulting *others*, upon a letter of a foreign minister highly interesting to my honor, before the smallest intimation to me; but they seemed also to be perfectly acquainted with its contents, and were requested to ask questions for their satisfaction; the other was, that I was desired to retire into another room, until you should converse with them upon what I had said.

Your confidence in me, Sir, has been unlimited, and, I can truly affirm, unabused. My sensations, then, cannot be concealed, when I find that confidence so immediately withdrawn, without a word or distant hint being previously dropped to me. This, Sir, as I mentioned in your room, is a situation in which I cannot hold my present office, and therefore I hereby resign it.

It will not, however, be concluded from hence, that I mean to relinquish the inquiry. No, Sir; very far from it. I will also meet any inquiry; and to prepare for it, if I learn that there is a chance of overtaking M. Fauchet before he sails, I will go to him immediately.

I have to beg the favor of you to permit me to be furnished with a copy of the letter, and I will prepare an answer to it; which I perceive that I cannot do as I wish, merely upon the few hasty memoranda, which I took with my pencil.

I am satisfied, Sir, that you will acknowledge one piece of justice to be due on the occasion; which is, that, until an inquiry can be made, the affair shall continue in secrecy under your injunction. For, after pledging myself for a more specific investigation of all the suggestions, I here most solemnly deny that any overture ever came from me, which was to produce money to me or any others for me; and that in any manner, directly or indirectly, was a shilling ever received by me; nor was it ever contemplated by me, that one shilling should be applied by M. Fauchet to any purpose relative to the insurrection.

I presume, Sir, that the paper, No. 6, to which he refers, is not in your possession. Otherwise you would have shown it to me. If I am mistaken, I cannot doubt that you will suffer me to have a copy of it.

I shall pass my accounts at the auditor's and comptroller's offices, and transmit to you a copy.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect, yours, &c.

EDMUND RANDOLPH.

No. IV. p. 64.

REMARKS OF JOHN JAY ON CERTAIN POINTS OF THE BRITISH TREATY.

JOHN JAY TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

New York, 3 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

I have been honored with yours of the 31st of last month.

The article in the treaty to which you allude, namely, the *last*, was proposed by me to Lord Grenville, because it seemed probable, that, when the treaty should for some time have gone into operation, defects might become manifest, and further arrangements become desirable, which had not occurred to either of us; because no plan of an article relative to *impressments*, which we could devise, was so free from objections as to meet with mutual approbation; and because the Lord Chancellor's proposed article, relative to alienism and other interesting objects, was of such magnitude, that I did not think any stipulations respecting them should be ventured, until after that article had received the most mature consideration of our government.

I think that in endeavouring to obtain a new modification of the twelfth article, an extension of the tonnage from seventy to one hundred tons should be attempted; for, although this was strenuously pressed before, yet I can see no inconvenience in repeating it by way of experiment, not insisting on it as an ultimatum. In my opinion it would also be expedient, that the new article should *specify* the particular commodities, which our vessels shall be permitted to carry from the United States to the British Islands, and import from the latter into the former.

As to the impressment of seamen, the forming of any very satisfactory arrangement on that head will, I fear, continue to prove an arduous task. In my opinion Great Britain should at present agree not to take any seamen from our vessels on the *ocean*, or in her *colonial* ports, on account of the *injuries* thence resulting to our navigation. It would be difficult to support a position, that she ought to agree not to seek for and take her own seamen on board of any merchant vessels in the ports of Great Britain or Ireland.

In the India or thirteenth article, "it is expressly agreed, that

the vessels of the United States shall not carry any of the articles exported by them from the said British territories to any port or place except to some port or place in *America*, where the same shall be unladen." I would propose, that, after the word AMERICA, be added, *or to some foreign port or place in* ASIA. There is indeed nothing in the article as it now stands, which restrains the India Company's government from continuing to permit our vessels to carry cargoes from India to China; but it would be better, if possible, to establish this as a *right* by express agreement.

For my own part, I regard the present moment as unfavorable for negotiations with Great Britain. Although she has reason, not only to approve but to admire the conduct of our government, yet, while it appears doubtful to her, whether the sentiments and disposition of the great body of our people are pacific and friendly or otherwise, it seems natural to suppose it will be her policy to be reserved. To multiply engagements with, and facilities to us, under such circumstances, might be ascribed to her apprehensions; and, as her government will doubtless perceive this risk, I suspect they will be strongly inclined to avoid it.

Besides, I should doubt the policy of introducing into the negotiation *at present* either so many or such propositions, as may defer the ultimate ratification so late, as to prevent orders to evacuate the posts by the 1st of June next from being sent in due season. The commercial part of the treaty may be terminated at the expiration of two years after the war; and, in the mean time, a state of things more auspicious to negotiation will probably arrive; especially if the next session of Congress should not interpose new obstacles.

God bless you, my dear Sir; believe me to be, with perfect respect, esteem, and attachment, yours, &c.

JOHN JAY.

JOHN JAY TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

New York, 4 September, 1795.

DEAR SIR,

Since mine to you of yesterday, I have occasionally turned my thoughts to the occasion of it.

I presume, that the treaty is ratified agreeably to the advice of the Senate, and that, if Great Britain consents to the suspension of the twelfth article (which I believe will be the case), the treaty will thereupon be ratified on her part and become final. Of consequence, that the modification contemplated of the twelfth arti-

cle, together with every other additional engagement, which it may be judged useful to negotiate, will be a posterior work; and the new articles, as they shall be agreed upon, will from time to time be added to the treaty.

Under this view of the business I find, that my letter requires explanation.

I take it, that the treaty will first be ratified by Great Britain, and put out of question, before any new propositions be offered or even mentioned; so that no new matter may be introduced, that could afford occasion for, or invite, hesitation or delay.

That being despatched, the question which presents itself is, What new propositions will it be advisable to bring forward into negotiation? On this point I see no reason to change the sentiments expressed in my letter.

On reading the Lord Chancellor's article, (a copy of which was transmitted with my letter to Mr. Randolph of the 19th of November last,) you will find that a part of it, which respects the mutual admission of evidence, &c., is of considerable importance, and is calculated, in the language of the last article, "to facilitate intercourse and obviate difficulties." Would it not be well to submit this article to the consideration of the Attorney-General, and some of the judges, before any instructions on the subject matter of it are given to our negotiation?

With perfect respect, esteem, and attachment, I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

JOHN JAY.

No. V. pp. 132, 141.

OPINIONS OF THE CABINET ADVISING MR. MONROE'S RECALL FROM FRANCE.

THE SECRETARIES OF DEPARTMENTS TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 2 July, 1796.

SIR,

Agreeably to your directions, we have consulted together on the subject of your letter of the 24th of June; and we are of opinion, that a direct explanation should be asked of M. Adet, the minister of the French Republic, in the terms of the enclosed draft of a letter to him, which, as you desired, will be sent without delay.

We are also of opinion, that the executive has not the po
the recess of the Senate, to originate the appointment of
ister extraordinary to France; and that the recall of Mr. M
by creating a vacancy, can alone authorize the sending of
minister to that country.

On the expediency of this change we are agreed. We
the great interests of the United States require, that the
near the French government some faithful organ to explai
real views, and to ascertain those of the French. Ou
obliges us to be explicit. Although the present minister p
tentiary of the United States at Paris has been amply fu
with documents, to explain the views and conduct of the
States, yet his own letters authorize us to say, that he has
to use them, and thereby exposed the United States to
mischiefs, which could flow from jealousies and erroneo
ceptions of their views and conduct. Whether this da
omission arose from such an attachment to the cause of
as rendered him too little mindful of the interests of h
country, or from mistaken views of the latter, or from ar
cause, the evil is the same. We therefore conceive it to
dispensably necessary, that the present minister plenipoten
the United States at Paris should be recalled, and another
can citizen appointed in his stead.

Such being our opinion, we beg leave to name for yo
sideration Patrick Henry and John Marshall of Virgini
Charles Cotesworth Pinckney and William Smith of Soutl
lina; either of whom would, we believe, so explain the
and views of the United States, as to satisfy the French R
and thereby remove the danger of a rupture or inconvenie
troversy with that nation; or, failing of this desirable e
satisfy the citizens of the United States, that the fault was
be imputed to their own government.

In confirmation of our opinion of the expediency of r
Mr. Monroe, we think the occasion requires, that we comm
a private letter from him, which came to our hands since
Philadelphia. This letter corresponds with other intellige
his political opinions and conduct. A minister, who h
made the notorious enemies of the whole system of gov
his confidential correspondents in matters, which affect th
ernment, cannot be relied on to do his duty to the latter
private letter we received in confidence. Among other
stances, that will occur to your recollection, the anonymou

from France to Thomas Blount and others are very noticeable. We know that Montflorence was the writer, and that he was the chancellor of the consul Skipwith; and, from the connexion of Mr. Monroe with those persons, we can entertain no doubt, that the anonymous letters were written with his privity.

These anonymous communications from officers of the United States in a foreign country, on matters of a public nature, and which deeply concern the interests of the United States in relation to that foreign country, are proofs of sinister designs, and show that the public interests are no longer safe in the hands of such men.

The information contained in the confidential communication you were pleased to make to us on the project of the French government, relative to the commerce of the United States, is confirmed by the open publication of the same substantially and more minutely in the newspapers. Mr. Fenno's, in which it first appeared, we now enclose. Even the execution of the project appears to have been commenced. The following article is in Mr. Fenno's paper of the 28th ultimo.

"*New London, June 23d.* — Arrived brig Aurora, S. Wadsworth, of Hartford, in fourteen days from Port Paix. Left there sloop Crisis, Cook, of Warwick, with mules; sloop Scrub, Williams, of Middletown; and a brig from Philadelphia; all carried in by French privateers. It was not pretended to make prizes of them; but their cargoes were taken by the administration at their own price, and due-bills given therefor. Those, who go there to trade, and those carried in, are all treated alike. Captain Wadsworth received a due-bill for eleven thousand livres."

The foregoing we respectfully submit to the consideration and decision of the President of the United States.

TIMOTHY PICKERING, *Secretary of State.*
OLIVER WOLCOTT, *Secretary of the Treasury.*
JAMES M^cHENRY, *Secretary of War.*

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

Alexandria, 7 July, 1796.

Sir,

After bestowing the best consideration upon the several matters mentioned in your letter of the 6th, I had formed an opinion, that our minister plenipotentiary at Paris ought not to be permitted to continue there any longer, than until the arrival of his successor; and that it was not only expedient, but absolutely necessary, that

he should be immediately recalled and another minister appointed. Upon this subject, I concur in sentiment with the heads of departments, as expressed in their letter of the 2d instant.

As well during the session of the Senate, as during its recess, the President alone has power to remove from office; and the Senate is not authorized to give, nor he to demand, their advice and consent relative to a removal or dismission from office. Whenever a vacancy occurs during the *recess* of the Senate, whether produced by death, inability, resignation, *dismission*, or other just cause, it may be filled by the President until the end of the next session after the appointment.

If the present minister be recalled, his place may and I think ought to be supplied by a minister plenipotentiary.

I am inclined to the opinion, that an envoy extraordinary to the French Republic cannot be sent by the President without the advice of the Senate; for without their advice he cannot make a new office and fill it, though he may alone fill for a limited time an old office become vacant during its recess. Whether such envoyship ought to be considered as a new office or not, would be made a question; and therefore on that account, even if the President could send an envoy extraordinary without the advice of the Senate, it is expedient that he should not; for his conduct should be as unquestionable as possible. Besides, at this time I do not think a necessity exists for such an appointment; and as much good may be reasonably expected from the services of a new minister plenipotentiary, as from an envoy extraordinary.

My reasons for holding the opinion, that the present minister should be recalled, are,

1. From his letters in the office of the department of state it appears he has neglected or failed to justify, or truly represent, to the Republic of France the conduct and motives of his own country, relative to the treaty with Great Britain. This was a most important duty of his station, to do which he was fully and pointedly instructed; and, though he may have proposed at various times verbal communications on the subject, which were slighted, yet, knowing as he must or ought to have known the sentiments of that government, and that no verbal communications were in fact received from him, but only proposed by him to be made, it became his indispensable duty to present in writing that view of his country's conduct, which he was directed and enabled by our Secretary of State to present.

2. His correspondence with the executive of the United States

has been and is unfrequent, unsatisfactory, reserved, and without cordiality or confidence on his part.

I might add other reasons, if they were necessary; for instance, that he corresponds less confidentially with the executive of the United States, than with the opposers and libellers of his administration, and that there is too much reason to believe he is furthering the views of a faction in America, more than the peace and happiness of the United States.

As to the capture of the *Mount Vernon*, the answer of M. Adet was so evasive, as in my mind to confirm the truth of those things, that had been heard from other quarters respecting the designs of France against our trade; and therefore the second letter written by the Secretary of State to him became proper and necessary.

Of itself the capture of that vessel would not be much regarded, as declaratory of the disposition of the French nation; but, connected with other things, it deserves some attention; and the more so, if the privateer accompanied the ship down the river, or lay in wait for her, and, so soon as they were out of *territorial* jurisdiction, made prize of her.

No person would be fitter than John Marshall to go to France for supplying the place of our minister; but it is scarcely short of absolute certainty, that he would not accept any such office. The same may be said of Mr. Henry.

I am a stranger to C. C. Pinckney. If he has fitness, and will take the charge, I should prefer him to Mr. William Smith, because the latter is a member of Congress, and because he is by general reputation disagreeable to the French people in America, and rather more than some others, who go with him in politics. Mr. Carroll is too rich, and leads now too retired a life, to be acceptable in any public character to many persons.

After all objections that are to be made to any individual to fill the vacancy that is contemplated, I feel no hesitation in declaring, that some person ought to be appointed to fill the office occupied by our minister at Paris; and I have no doubt that your acquaintance with men in America will enable you to supply his place with advantage to the community.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with the most perfect respect, your obedient servant.

CHARLES LEE, *Attorney-General.*

No. VI. p. 156.

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

Department of State, 21 July, 1796.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose a letter from Colonel Monroe, dated the 2d of May, (which was received late in the evening of last Tuesday,) with the papers accompanying it, containing the complaints of the French Republic against the government of the United States, and Mr. Monroe's answer to those complaints. I have only substituted a translation of the statement of M. de Lacroix, the French minister for foreign affairs, for the French copy, which I retain in the office.

After the multiplied rumors of serious uneasiness, and even of resentment, on the part of the French Republic towards the United States, it will give you great satisfaction to find their complaints to be such only as the statement of M. de Lacroix exhibits; all being either wholly unfounded, or resting on erroneous representations or misconceptions of facts, or misconstructions of treaties and the law of nations. Mr. Monroe's answer to these complaints is sufficient to obviate them; although the facts and arguments, with which he had been furnished, authorized on some points a more forcible explanation.

Yesterday I received a letter from Mr. Van Polanen, in New York, announcing his appointment to be the minister resident from the United Netherlands to the United States, of which I have the honor to enclose a translation, and to request your instruction thereon. To-day I acknowledged the receipt of his letter, and promised to communicate to him your determination as soon as made known to me.

Connected with this subject are the advices from the Hague. On the 13th instant, I received a letter from Mr. T. B. Adams, dated the 28th of February last, relative to the change of government in that country, and his virtual acknowledgment of the new order of things on the part of the United States. I have since received a duplicate, and now do myself the honor to send you the original.

Mr. Adams grounds his proceeding on a letter to his brother from the department of state, dated the 27th of February, 1795, in which I find the following passage.

"The maxim of the President towards France has been to follow the government of the people. Whatever regimen a majority of *them* shall establish, is both *de facto* and *de jure* that to which our minister there addresses himself. If therefore the *independency* of the United Netherlands continues, it is wished that you make no difficulty in passing from the old to any new constitution of the people. If the new rulers will accept your old powers and credentials, offer them. If they require others, adapted to the new order of things, assure the proper bodies or individuals, that you will write for them, and doubt not that they will be expedited."

Mr. Adams's conduct appears to be perfectly conformable to this instruction, which I perceive was given in answer to a question on the subject, proposed by his brother in his letter of November 2d, 1794. I am, Sir, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

No. VII. p. 163.

PAPERS RELATING TO THE IMPRISONMENT OF LAFAYETTE AT OLMUTZ.

DUKE DE LIANCOURT TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.*

Philadelphia, 25 July, 1796.

SIR,

I ought to apologize for the liberty I take in writing to you, when I am deprived of the advantage of being known to you, and when political considerations prevented my being introduced to you on my arrival in this country; but my apology for that liberty will be found in the motive of this letter.

The unfortunate Lafayette's friends and relations have sent to me the two enclosed letters, which he wished should be communicated to me, and which I have received only now at my returning from the southern States. Those friends wish I should present

---

* This letter was written in English by the Duke de Liancourt, and is marked in some parts by foreign idioms. The *Extracts* which follow it are transcribed from a manuscript in his handwriting, and were probably translated by him.

them to you; they wish I should converse with you about the ways to make an end of the long and cruel captivity of that honest man. I know some persons, and particularly the generous Dr. Bollmann, have discoursed with you on that subject. I know also, that, should Lafayette's name not have been pronounced to you by any, the invariable constancy of your friendship for him would never let you forget his dreadful situation, and that you would think of the most proper way of being serviceable to the friend, whose merits you appreciate and whose misery you know. However superfluous it may be to call your attention to him, you will judge, that, the duty being prescribed to me, it would be a fault in me if I were not to acquit myself of it; and, if my particular affection for Lafayette makes me regard that duty as a most imperious one, you will excuse me for it. Besides, my letter to you being yet unknown to any one, its inconveniency is limited to the trouble you will have in reading it.

By Madame de Lafayette's letter to General Ferrary, you will see how barbarous is the rigor of the treatment she receives; a rigor, in comparison with which, her treatment in Robespierre's prisons, during sixteen months, seems mild to her remembrance. You are certainly acquainted with the audience granted by the Emperor to Madame de Lafayette on her passage through Vienna; and you know, when she implored of him her husband's liberation, the Emperor answered her, "*His hands were tied up on that subject, M. de Lafayette's liberation being out of his own power.*" You know the Emperor's ministers, less reserved than their master had been, pronounced to her, that, "*If his Imperial Majesty should grant M. de Lafayette's liberation, even if the watch upon him to prevent his escape were less rigorous, the Emperor would then become an object of distrust to his ally, the King of England;*" and you have, Sir, unquestionably concluded, with all those who are acquainted with those authentic answers, that the part of Lafayette's conduct, for which his fetters have been forged, and are now daily riveted, is not his participation in the French revolution, but in that of America, his unbounded devotion to the cause of the liberty and independence of the United States. That is the real *crime*, never to be forgotten by the King of England, and on account of which only Lafayette is plunged into a dungeon.*

* How far this statement took its coloring from the imagination of the writer, or the conjectures of the friends of Lafayette, may admit of a question. There seems no doubt, however, that the British government had it in their power to liberate the sufferer at any time after he was immured in

You will read, Sir, in Lafayette's letter to Messrs. Bollmann and Huger, how confident he is in your friendship, and in the kindness of the American nation. He relies upon his title of *American citizen.* You will read, that, being by circumstances excluded, as he is, from his native country, he depends firmly upon his right to be claimed by that, to the cause of which he has devoted his youth, and which he has served with all his heart and means. And you will observe, Sir, that Lafayette, when he wrote that letter, was ignorant that the honorable employment of his first years is the motive of his actual captivity. You will find, also, how confident he is in Dr. Bollmann's active mind and courageous generosity, proper, as he thinks, to help your good intentions for him, and the interest of his fellow-citizens.

I should look at myself as acting improperly and even hurting your feelings, if I were to urge you, Sir, either in the name of Lafayette's friends and relations, or in his own, to employ all the means you can for restoring to liberty and life the man, whom you have seen embracing, with as complete a devotion as your own, the cause which places you among the greatest men; the man, who would have exposed his life to save yours, or to contribute to your glory; the man, whom you have judged deserving the title of *your friend;* the man, whose son receives from you the proofs of a paternal affection. Such a man cannot be unfortunate without your employing yourself very often in seeking for a way to terminate his misery.

You will have read in the public papers M. de Lafayette's printed letter. I should blame the dissimulation, which should prevent me from confessing to you, that I made that letter public. In all parts of America where I have travelled, and I have been in nearly all the States of the Union, I have heard M. de Lafayette's name pronounced everywhere with almost as unanimous a voice of friendship and interest, as I have heard your own with that of

---

the prison of Olmutz. When Gouverneur Morris was in Vienna, he had an interview with the Baron de Thugut, the Emperor's principal minister, December 18th, 1796, at which he solicited the release of Lafayette.

"But," he writes in his Diary, "I find that it is in vain. He (the Baron de Thugut) says, that probably he will be discharged at the peace. To which I reply, that I never had any doubt of that, and had taken upon me long ago to give such assurances, but that I wish it were done sooner; and add, that I am sure it would have a good effect in England, giving my reasons. He says, that, if England will ask for him, they will be very glad to get rid of him in that way, and that *they* may, if they please, turn him loose in London."— SPARKS's *Life of Gouverneur Morris,* Vol. I. p. 444.

respect, admiration, confidence, and affection. The public of that letter seemed to me proper, to keep alive that dese disposition; and I did not see any inconsistency in it. Fo as I am, both by my situation and disposition, from any pol aims, I am not and never shall be so to the duties of friend and, if I were less a friend of Lafayette than I am, I should on myself as bound by the claims of humanity to use all m in my power to alleviate his misery.

I am, Sir, with the greatest respect,
your most humble and most obedient servant,
LAROCHEFOUCAULT LIANCOUR

EXTRACTS FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY M. LATOUR MAUBOU IN THE PRISON OF OLMUTZ.*

Olmutz, 26 July, 17

It was said to the General to go to *Hoff*.† An equivoca pression prevented his hearing the name of that town, an went on the road to Prussia, by which we were come ourse instead of following that which was indicated to him. His l were so much hurt and bruised, that he could not move wit pain. One of his arms was sprained, which had been cause the horse's fall; one of his fingers had been mangled by the

* Latour Maubourg was a friend of Lafayette, captured at the same and confined in the same prisons till they were both liberated.

† The allusion here is to the attempt of Dr. Bollmann and Mr. Hug liberate Lafayette from prison. It had been concerted by a secret cor nication between Lafayette and his two friends, that, when he should out with his guard, as he was sometimes allowed to do for exercise, should seize upon that occasion to effect his rescue.

"Having ascertained that a carriage, which they supposed must co Lafayette, since there was a prisoner and an officer inside and a guard hind, had passed out of the gate of the fortress, they mounted and follo They rode by it, and then slackening their pace and allowing it again t ahead, exchanged signals with the prisoner. At two or three miles fron gate, the carriage left the high road, and passing into a less frequented t in the midst of an open country, Lafayette descended to walk for exer guarded only by the officer who had been riding with him. This was dently the moment for their attempt. They therefore rode up at once; after an inconsiderable struggle with the officer, from which the guard to alarm the citadel, the rescue was completed. One of the horses, how had escaped during the contest, and thus only one remained with whic proceed. Lafayette was immediately mounted on this horse, and Mr. H told him, in English, to go to Hoff. He mistook what was said to him mere general direction to go *off*; delayed a moment to see if he could

poral's biting it when struggling on the ground. It was almost night. Oppressed with pain and fatigue, and especially with the anxious fear of his liberators being taken, his only wish was then to reach the frontier, to hide himself there, and to propose thence to return himself to prison, if his two generous friends were set at liberty. As he did not know the road, he asked a countryman to be his guide. His broken German, the blood which covered him, his torn clothes, discovered what he was. The countryman said he was going to fetch a horse to show him the way, and went to the nearest town to inform the people, who laid hold of him when he passed by.

Next day, Sunday, about one o'clock, M. de Lafayette was brought back to Olmutz in an open carriage. He was taken down to the *corps de guard*, undressed, and searched, as the diamond miners are said to be, and afterwards returned to his prison, from which had been taken the little house furniture before left to him. Some time after arrived the general, M. Arco, successor to M. Spleny, and these are the words by which he comforted him.

"The rogues, who were so bold as to carry you off, are arrested. They shall be hung. It shall be under your window; and, if there is no executioner, I will do that office myself."

It is needless to express to you what effect those atrocious

---

assist them; then went on; then rode back again, and asked them, if he could be of no service; and finally, urged anew, galloped slowly away.

"The horse, that had escaped, was soon recovered, and both Dr. Bollmann and Mr. Huger mounted him, intending to follow and assist Lafayette. But the animal proved intractable, threw them, and left them for some time stunned by their fall. On recovering their horse a second time, Dr. Bollmann alone mounted; Mr. Huger thinking, that, from his own imperfect knowledge of the German, he could not do as much towards effecting their main purpose. These accidents defeated their romantic enterprise. Mr. Huger, who could now attempt his escape only on foot, was soon stopped by some peasants, who had witnessed what had passed. Dr. Bollmann easily arrived at Hoff; but not finding Lafayette there, lingered about the frontiers till the next night, when he too was arrested and delivered up to the Austrians. And finally Lafayette, having taken a wrong road and pursued it till his horse could proceed no further, was stopped at the village of Jägersdorf, as a suspicious person, and detained there until he was recognised by an officer from Olmutz, two days afterwards. All three of them were brought back to the citadel separately, and were there separately confined, without being permitted to know any thing of each other's fate."—TICKNOR's *Outlines of the Life of Lafayette*, p. 38.

This event occurred on the 8th of November, 1794. Bollmann and Huger were rigorously confined eight months, and then liberated by the Austrian government.

words had on my unfortunate friend's mind. He felt already a very hard fever. His arm and his side were very much swelled; the wound of his finger was grown worse; but the misfortune of his liberators was undoubtedly his greatest suffering. They made him wait four days for a physician, from whose mouth he could not get any other answer, than, "You are not very sick."

A few days after, the officer was changed, and in his place came a major, who was born jailer, as Voltaire was born poet. You cannot form an adequate idea of the brutality, the insolence, and the barbarity of this old monster. Men are pretty much like dogs, who all agree to bite the beaten one. All those brutalities are certainly unknown to the Emperor; but one has very much to complain of when in the hands of subalterns. Lafayette was interrogated by a committee of very polite officers. Those examinations were repeated five times during a fortnight. He always denied, till the confession and arrestation of his liberators were proved to him by their own handwriting. Thus he charged himself the most he could, as you may easily believe. Since two months we are told, that those two generous men have recovered their liberty, but we have no certainty of it. Every letter, which reaches me, appears to me a kind of miracle. My two unfortunate friends have not seen one from any body. Could you imagine, that the abominable Arco could never be prevailed upon to let them know the accounts, which you gave me from their families; nor even, at my request, ask on that subject his King's permission? He brought me himself your letter, which he ordered me to answer directly in his presence, showing me great politeness, as false as exaggerated. Finally, he was so unhappy by my happiness, that he died a fortnight afterwards. He was carried off by a dysentery. Since his death, there is here a General Micolini, whom we do not see, but who undoubtedly has not adopted the line of conduct of his predecessor; for, though we are not better used, at least more polite manners are employed towards us.

If Dr. Bollmann is free, as I hope he is, let him know, that, if it is yet time to revive the negotiations, which he proposed to Lafayette, he will give his assent to every expense, which shall be made to procure his liberty. Inform Cadignan of it, and Boinville, and those who got his money into their hands. I firmly believe, that, if his friends wish to see him again, they must spare nothing, for he is in a very bad situation. Let Dr. Bollmann and the young American know his gratitude for their generous enterprise. Let them know how much he suffered from

their situation, which he would have changed at the price of his own life.

All Lafayette's wishes are turned towards America. By his attempt to escape he is now deprived of every means of transmitting any news of himself; but, as to his particular intentions, this letter can be depended upon, as if it were his own handwriting; and I warrant it myself. His servants are not any more permitted to attend him, which is very disagreeable for him, and the more teasing, as it is a vexation without object, for certainly his servants did not contribute to his escape.

I send you an instruction, which I just now received, and which Lafayette has written upon a handkerchief with his own blood, to give it to one of his servants, whose liberty he hoped to obtain, on account of his being very sick, (he is the poor Chavaniac); but to get out of this place, it is not sufficient to be dying, it is necessary to be undoubtedly dead. I have copied exactly that instruction from the bloody handkerchief, and I recommend to you to forward it to all those, to whom it can be interesting, and whose names are mentioned. I had resolved to take out of it the article relating to Puzy and to me; but my friend insists, and requires absolutely its being left. Although I do not see very evidently how we could do for his liberty what his other friends have never been able to do, yet I comply with his desire, and the conviction he is in, that our release would be conducive to him.

You see in Lafayette's instructions, how much he insists on the plan, with the particulars of which Dr. Bollmann is acquainted. He is no more fit to deal himself; he is too much known; but, as the necessary proceedings are accompanied with no danger at all, it is easy to find a man, intelligent, and who can be depended upon, and whom Dr. Bollmann would instruct beforehand. These means, united with the American solicitations, and with the incessant care of our friends to show and demonstrate the utility of our liberty, on the supposition of constitutional views wanting to be supported, must immediately open the eyes of the Austrian ministry, and convince them evidently how unquestionable are the arguments urged in our favor. Consequently insist strongly on that article.

In case, as it is said, *Monsieur* * should have offered himself as a constitutional king, I suppose that he would have made his

* Afterwards Louis the Eighteenth.

arrangements with M. d'Orleans and his party. They are sure, that we know them too well. How many motives of exclusion for us! Besides those very motives, which we should bring forward ourselves. But all those characters possess abilities, know France, and will easily conceive how many friends will be procured to them by Lafayette's liberation, as these will then believe, that the constitution is really the object in view. Those characters will also conceive, that Lafayette's captivity preserves to him all his constitutional popularity, which, by three months of inactive liberty, would be entirely destroyed. Lafayette, a prisoner, is the victim of his opinion. Lafayette, when in America, is nothing but an emigrant, who has quitted his party. At the same time, that all these considerations are offered to those different persons, the formal obligation of his immediate departure for America must be taken; and he will ratify it the more willingly, as he will not then run the risk of losing his right of American citizen, which is his dearest quality, by mixing himself in the affairs of France, where there is no more glory to be acquired by him. You know that the Americans have enacted an express law, depriving of the right of citizenship every one, who shall intermeddle with the French quarrels for any party whatever. If, then, an influential interference from *Monsieur* should coöperate with all the other means before indicated, it is certain that the Emperor will not resist any longer.

If in France the honest men, (but are any still there?) or if those, who pretend to be so, should ever have again the superiority, could not they, concurrently with Mr. Jefferson, employ themselves openly for our liberation? But always with the condition, that Lafayette should go to America; for, if that condition was not expressly mentioned, he would fulfil it himself. I intimate to you that hint of mine; but you only, who are still enjoying the daylight, can judge if it be practicable.

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER WRITTEN BY MADAME DE LAFAYETTE, WHILE IN THE PRISON OF OLMUTZ, TO GENERAL FERRARY, ONE OF THE MINISTERS OF THE EMPEROR OF AUSTRIA.*

I am particularly grateful for the regret you express at the impossibility of granting my requests. I made them, in the first

* Madame de Lafayette, with her two daughters, joined her husband in the prison of Olmutz in October, 1795. This letter was written a few weeks afterwards.

instance, to the commanding officer of Olmutz; because his Imperial Majesty had told me to address myself to him. I made them in writing, because I had no means of seeing him. I asked,

1. Permission to go to mass, because I ought to do every thing in my power to go on Sundays and holidays.

2. To be attended occasionally by a servant; because, having learned when at Vienna, that Messrs. Bournonville, Camus, Bancal, and others, conventional prisoners who had servants, enjoyed here the liberty of seeing them through the day, I flattered myself that the same favor might be granted to me for some moments.

3. I also asked, that M. de Maubourg and M. de Puzy might pass some hours with us; because, even in Robespierre's time, in the prisons of France (where, as you know, I passed sixteen months), I was in the habit of seeing the prisoners communicate with each other.

I beg pardon for having in this respect allowed my confidence to carry me too far.

I confess, with great pleasure, that we agreed to participate all the rigors of M. de Lafayette's prison, and that this was the only favor we applied for. Our sentiments are still the same; and we repeat, with all our hearts, that we are happier with M. de Lafayette, even in this prison, than we could be anywhere else without him. To justify, however, the liberty I have taken with you, I will remind you, Sir, that his Imperial Majesty, in the audience he was pleased to grant me, had the goodness to say to me, that I should find M. de Lafayette very well treated, and that, if I had any request to make, I should be well satisfied with the commanding officer.

I have also the honor of reminding you, Sir, that his Imperial Majesty permitted me to write directly to himself, and to address my letters to the Prince of Rosemberg; and as, since we have been shut up, I have been utterly deprived of the means of writing to the Emperor, or even to M. Rosemberg, I conceived it my duty to address my requests to you, and beg you will excuse me if they have appeared somewhat exaggerated to you.

J. ERICK BOLLMANN TO PRESIDENT WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 10 April 1796.

SIR,

It is in compliance with your request to communicate to you by writing my ideas respecting the means that might be used in

order to rescue General Lafayette from imprisonment, tha
the honor to submit the following remarks to your consi

1. It appears from the answer, which the Emperor
Madame de Lafayette, and from a conversation she h
Baron Thugut, his Majesty's present minister of foreign
that the imprisonment of the Marquis is prolonged not
from motives of policy or animosity peculiar to the Empe
self, or to any of his ministers, as from a restriction h
under with respect to this subject by the British ministry

2. The inducement, which leads to this conduct of th
ministry, seems to be personal hatred, and an apprehen
the Marquis, when arrived in this country, might emb
interests of France, and make use of his popularity to
the public mind from the British cause. It is of such a
therefore, as is likely to continue during the present war,
of which appears to be far distant.

3. From the unsuccessful applications already made
Pinckney in London, and from the reasons stated in the p
paragraph, it seems to follow, that renewed applications in
provided they could not be supported by more weighty
ments than urged hitherto, would prove equally ineffectu
that it therefore would be useless to pursue this way of gi
sistance to the Marquis, though in itself the most direct
most natural.

4. But it is not probable, that during the present war,
dependence of the Emperor on British supplies, he should
prevailed upon openly to counteract the request of the
ministry, and to set the Marquis free by a formal order
effect. All that can be aimed at (and which may be obt
my opinion) is, to induce him to connive at his escape, a
to change the present rigor of his imprisonment, which it l
easy for the Marquis to effect. Similar expedients have b
quently resorted to by the monarchs in Europe in similar
stances.

5. It will therefore be necessary to proceed with great
spection, and to avoid increasing the embarrassment of
peror in this affair, or trusting his political delicacy.
application in London would be improper, because it migl
sion a repeated request to the Emperor to keep the Ge
prison. A direct and ostensible application in Vienna w
improper also, because a compliance of the Emperor would
case be more evident, and expose him and his ministers

sure. *An immediate interference* of the United States seems in every respect preferable; and the less this interference is suspected in London, or manifested in Vienna, the more probably it will prove successful.

6. There are in Europe, I believe, principally two persons, whose good services it would be beneficial to obtain. The one, Count Bernstorff, minister of foreign affairs of the King of Denmark, a consummate politician, of great integrity, a professed admirer of the Marquis, and, according to some late accounts from Germany, at present very influential in the proceedings of the cabinet of Vienna. The other, Prince Henry of Prussia, likewise a friend and personal acquaintance of the Marquis, and who, since the peace with France, has reassumed a very active and decided part in the management of Prussian politics. It is by these two eminent characters, that an application to the Emperor in behalf of the Marquis may be procured from the Kings of Denmark and Prussia; and the most effectual step, therefore, that in my opinion at present could be taken for the benefit of the Marquis, would be to send a confidential person to Europe with several letters from General Washington, written in his character as President of the United States to the King of Denmark, the King of Prussia, Count Bernstorff, and Prince Henry. The distance being so great, and the communication between Germany and the United States so slow and difficult, it would perhaps be advisable to write another letter to the Emperor himself, which might be delivered by the Danish or Prussian minister in Vienna. All these letters should be left at the discretion of the confidential person employed, who will make use of them according to the situation of affairs in Europe at his arrival there. A minute inquiry into all influential circumstances, and the advice of Count Bernstorff and Prince Henry, would direct him.

7. All these efforts, however, would probably be unsuccessful, unless supported by the private interest of some very influential individuals in Vienna. To gain the exertion of these may require means, to employ which would perhaps be incompatible with the delicacy of the executive chief of a republic; and I therefore think the confidential person to be employed ought to have, before his departure, an interview with young Lafayette, in order to receive from him the necessary means, and to make with him the necessary arrangements, relative to this point.

8. It appears to me, that the success of these new endeavours to rescue the General from imprisonment will in a great measure

depend on the choice of a person suited for this purpos better he is acquainted with General Lafayette, his chara merits, the attachment which this country at large and th dent personally bear to him, the more fully he is informe causes of his captivity, and the disposition of those on his fate depends, the better he will be able to furnish in hagen and Berlin the data for the application to be i Vienna. Besides, I think it may be advisable to choose i ence a person well acquainted with the German langua of some connexions in the country where he is to be s cause the necessity of taking various kinds of informati of maintaining a secret intelligence in Vienna and Olmutz friends of the Marquis, the great advantage that may ari the opportunity of making through these friends some c cations to the Marquis himself, and the occasion there for employing other persons in order to assist the Marq to receive him after he has been furnished with an opp to absent himself, — all these circumstances together make knowledge of the German language, and such connexion country where the Marquis is imprisoned, of no trifling tance to a desirable completion of this business.

9. I conclude with observing, that an active and g interference of this kind, should even the object not be o will, notwithstanding, be highly honorable to the United and beneficial to the Marquis. Honorable to the United because it is a testimony of their affection and their gr and beneficial to the Marquis, because it increases the co tion he enjoys in Europe, and comforts him in prison by ing his sensibility.

I have the honor to be with the highest esteem, Sir, d

J. Erick Bollm.

---

* It is well known, that political considerations prevented Washing taking any such measures as are here recommended for the releas fayette. From his knowledge of circumstances, moreover, he was w fied that they would not be successful. It is probable, that the Dr. Bollmann first suggested the idea of the letter to the Emperor of ny, written on the 15th of May, 1796.

No. VIII. p. 219.

ANONYMOUS LETTER TO GEORGE WASHINGTON, SIGNED WITH THE FICTITIOUS NAME OF *JOHN LANGHORNE.**

Warren, Albemarle County, 25 September, 1797.

SIR,

When a man of distinguished worth suffers unmerited calumny, it has the same effect as an eclipse of the sun, which serves only to make it admired the more. While it shines in unvaried light and splendor, it shines unnoticed; but, when it is obscured by some sudden and unexpected darkness, it attracts our attention, and emerges with an unusual and superior *éclat.* Such will be the only effect you will experience from those unjust aspersions, which have been lately thrown upon you. Nothing but truth can possibly last. They will vanish and leave behind them a more than usual lustre.

There is no cause, then, why you should distress or even disturb yourself a moment concerning them. Too imprudently delicate! Is your peace to be broken, because there are fools and knaves in the world? Is it possible, that you may suffer as much from the villany of others in this respect, as you could do from your own demerit? Of what use, then, is virtue? Of what use is the consciousness of uniform integrity, if it will not produce the only end both of wisdom and virtue, which is our own proper quiet and happiness? Certainly, under the direction of a right philosophy, it could not fail of producing both. It is in vain to labor, if we refuse to enjoy the fruits or effects of our industry. Would it not be absurd, after we had cultivated a garden, to deprive ourselves of the enjoyment of its fruits and flowers, because some malicious neighbour had reported that it was overrun with weeds? When we behold our walks and parterres in order, should we deny ourselves the pleasure they might afford us on account of such a report? Impossible! you say. It would be perfectly ridiculous. It is most true; and not less ridiculous, not less unreasonable and absurd, would it be for a virtuous man to

---

* As this letter is signed with a fictitious name, it is of no other importance than to show what insidious means were adopted by the enemies of Washington to lead him into a snare for party purposes. The person, who sent for his answer to the post-office, was known; but whether he was the writer of this letter, or only acted as an agent in this business, was not ascertained.

forfeit that happiness, to which his virtue entitles him, because malevolence has branded him with unjust accusation.

Till there shall be a possibility of banishing from human society all envy, all dishonesty, and all ill nature, it would be unwise to make ourselves miserable about their effects. Let those effects always be confined to the objects from whence they proceed; there it is only, that they ought to be; and there it is generally, that they are productive of misery. Every good man has a right to be happy, in spite of the most villanous machinations; and, if they make him otherwise, his philosophy at least is not equal to his virtue.

These observations have been made, Sir, in the hope that they might possibly administer some comfort to a mind eminently great and virtuous; not in the belief, that the calumnies against you have absolutely disturbed your peace, but in the possibility that at some time they might for a moment overcloud your happiness, which ought to be dear to every good man.

I am, Sir, with the highest sentiments of esteem for your person, and veneration for your character, your very humble servant,

JOHN LANGHORNE.

No. IX. p. 223.

LAFAYETTE'S ANSWER TO THE PROPOSAL OF THE AUSTRIAN MINISTER, THAT HE SHOULD BE RELEASED FROM THE PRISON OF OLMUTZ ON CERTAIN CONDITIONS.

The first intimations given to Lafayette, respecting his release from prison, were communicated by the Marquis de Chasteler, who was sent to Olmutz for that purpose by the Emperor of Austria. The conditions were prescribed, that he should immediately depart for America, and should pledge himself never to enter again the Austrian dominions. To these terms Lafayette refused to accede. The following is his answer to the Marquis de Chasteler, translated from a manuscript copy of the original.

LAFAYETTE TO THE MARQUIS DE CHASTELER.

"Olmutz, 25 July, 1797.

"The commission, with which the Marquis de Chasteler is charged, may be resolved into these three points.

"1. His Imperial Majesty desires to be informed of our situation at Olmutz. I am not disposed to lay before him any complaints. Many details will be found in the letters from my wife to the Austrian government; and if his Imperial Majesty, after reading these, shall not be satisfied with the instructions sent from Vienna in his name, I will cheerfully make to the Marquis de Chasteler any explanations he may desire.

"2. His Majesty, the Emperor and King, demands an assurance, that, immediately after my release, I will depart for America. This is an intention, which I have often manifested; but since, in the actual state of things, an assurance to this effect would seem to recognise a right to impose this condition upon me, I think it not proper to satisfy such a demand.

"3. His Majesty, the Emperor and King, has done me the honor to signify, that, as the principles which I profess are incompatible with the security of the Austrian government, it is his wish, that I should never again enter his dominions without his special permission. There are duties from which I cannot release myself; duties which I owe to the United States, and above all to France; nor can I consent to any act, which shall derogate from the rights of my country over my person.

"With these reservations, I can assure the Marquis de Chasteler, that it is my fixed determination never again to set my foot in any country, which yields obedience to his Imperial Majesty, the King of Bohemia and Hungary.

"LAFAYETTE."

No. X. p. 228.

REMARKS OF WASHINGTON ON MONROE'S "VIEW
CONDUCT OF THE EXECUTIVE OF THE UNITED S
COPIED FROM MANUSCRIPT NOTES.*

"In the month of May, 1794, I was invited by the I
of the United States, through the Secretary of State, t
the office of minister plenipotentiary to the French R
— Page 3.

After several attempts had failed to obtain a more eligi
acter.

"It had been too my fortune, in the course of my ser
differ from the administration upon many of our most i
public measures." — p. 3.

Is this adduced as conclusive evidence, that the admin
was in an error?

"I was persuaded from Mr. Morris's known political c
and principles, that his appointment, and especially at
when the French nation was in a course of revolution
arbitrary to a free government, would tend to discountena
republican cause there and at home, and otherwise weak
greatly to our prejudice, the connexion subsisting betw
two countries." — p. 4.

Mr. Morris was known to be a man of first rate abiliti
his integrity and honor had never been impeached. Besi
Morris was sent whilst the kingly government was in ex
at the end of 1791 or beginning of 1792.

"Mr. Jay was nominated to Great Britain; which non
too I opposed, because, under all the well-known circum
of the moment, I was of opinion we could not adopt

* In the library at Mount Vernon was a copy of Monroe's "*Vie
Conduct of the Executive in the Foreign Affairs of the United States,*"
ing marginal notes in the handwriting of General Washington.
these have been selected, and are here brought together, with such
as are necessary to afford a proper explanation of them. They seem
been intended by the writer as a vindication of his own conduct
certain statements made in the 'View.' The extracts are here den
marks of quotation. The remarks follow each extract. The volume
ing the autograph was presented by the late Judge Washington to an
jurist.

measure, consistently either with propriety, or any reasonable prospect of adequate success. I also thought, from a variety of considerations, it would be difficult to find, within the limits of the United States, a person who was more likely to improve, to the greatest possible extent, the mischief to which the measure naturally exposed us. This last example took place only a few weeks before my own appointment, which was on the 28th of May, 1794." — p. 4.

Did the then situation of our affairs admit of any other alternative than negotiation or war? Was there another man, more esteemed, to be found to conduct the former?

"When I considered these circumstances, I was surprised that this proposal should be made to me by the administration, and intimated the same to the Secretary of State; who replied that my political principles, which were known to favor the French revolution and to cherish a friendly connexion with France, were a strong motive with the President for offering me the mission, since he wished to satisfy the French government what his own sentiments were upon those points." — p. 4.

And who had better opportunities of knowing what these were, than the confidential officers about his person for the time being?

"Our affairs with France had fallen into great derangement, and required an immediate and decisive effort to retrieve them." — p. 4.

Did not this derangement proceed from the injurious conduct of the French, in their violations of the 23d and 24th articles of the treaty with the United States, and the application of the latter for redress?

"My instructions enjoined it on me to use my utmost endeavours to inspire the French government with perfect confidence in the solicitude, which the President felt *for the success of the French revolution, of his preference for France to all other nations as the friend and ally of the United States; of the grateful sense which we still retained for the important services that were rendered us by France in the course of our revolution;* and to declare in explicit terms, that, although neutrality was the lot we preferred, yet, in case we *embarked in the war, it would be on her side and against her enemies, be they who they might.*" — pp. 4 – 5.

And is there to be found in any letter from the government to him a single sentiment repugnant thereto? On the contrary, are not the same exhortations repeated over and over again? But

could it be inferred from hence, that, in order to please
we were to relinquish our rights, and sacrifice our comm

"Upon this point [Mr. Jay's mission to England] my
tions were as follows; 'It is not improbable you will be
to encounter on this head suspicions of various kinds. B
may declare the motives of that mission to be, *to obtain
diate compensation for our plundered property, and restit
the posts.*'"—p. 5.

And these *were* the *immediate motives*, but for which a
envoy would not have been sent. But did it follow, wh
expense was about to be incurred, that the government
not embrace the opportunity to settle and place other c
upon the best footing it could?

"Who [France and the United States] were now un
diverging from each other, and in danger of being thrown
apart; and, as I presumed, equally against the interest an
nation of both."—p. 7.

Why? Because one nation was seeking redress for vi
and injuries committed by the other.

"Upon my arrival in Paris, which was on the 2d of
1794, I found that the work of alienation and disunion h
carried further than I had before even suspected."—p. 7.

For the reasons above mentioned. If we had submi
them without remonstrating, we should still have been the
friends and allies.

"I presented my credentials to the commissary of foreign
soon after my arrival; but more than a week had elapse
I had obtained no answer, when or whether I should be re
A delay beyond a few days surprised me, because I cou
cern no adequate or rational motive for it."—p. 7.

How does this accord with his communications to the Se
of State? Has he not assigned very satisfactory reasons
delay? Does the answer of the President of the Conventi
dicate any coolness or discontent on the part of the Frenc
ernment? What then was it he had to contend against
outset?

"It was intimated to me that the Committee, or several
of its members, had imbibed an opinion, that Mr. Jay wa
to England with views unfriendly to France, and that my
to France was adopted for the purpose of covering and s
ing his to England; that the one was a measure of subs
import, contemplating on our part a close union with En

and that the other was an act of policy, intended to amuse and deceive." — p. 7.

Strange conception and want of information this, when it was notorious, that a war with Great Britain seemed to be almost unavoidable.

"I thought I perceived distinctly, that not only the temper which had been shown by the committee, but the general derangement of our affairs with France, proceeded in a great measure, if not altogether, from the same cause, a suspicion that we were unfriendly to them." — p. 9.

Or, more properly, perceiving, that we were not to be drawn into the vortex, if we could possibly avoid it

"My first note to the Committee of Public Safety on this subject bears date on the 3d of September, 1794; in which I discussed and combated copiously, and as ably as I could, the conduct of France in thus harassing our commerce against the stipulations of certain articles in our treaty with her; and urged earnestly the immediate repeal of ıe decrees, which authorized that proceeding." — p. 9.

But finally told it, contrary to express instructions, that, if it was not convenient to comply with those articles, the government and people of the United States would give them up with pleasure, although it was the pivot on which our claim was fixed.

"I do not wish to be understood as having been guided by political motives only in expressing the sentiments contained in that clause; on the contrary, I admit they were strictly my own; affirming at the same time that they would never have been thus expressed, had I not been satisfied they were such, as it was honorable for the United States to express, and were likely also to promote their interest." — p. 10.

Here is a measure adopted and avowed, which was beyond the powers of the executive, and for which, if he had exercised them, he might have been impeached; because it was not only dispensing with important articles of the treaty, but was surrendering the only grounds on which our claims of compensation could be established.

"From the Committee itself I could obtain no answer; and, from my informal applications to some of its members, I found that the difficulty of allowing our vessels to protect the property of English subjects, whilst they gave none to that of French citizens against the English cruisers, with that of distinguishing in our favor from the case of Denmark and Sweden, in which we

were now involved, were objections of great weight with the Committee." — p. 11.

Such was *our* treaty. If Denmark and Sweden were not entitled to the same by treaty, wherein lay the difficulty of discrimination? And what are the advantages of treaties, if they are to be observed no longer than they are convenient?

"I thought I perceived, still remaining in the councils of that body, a strong portion of that suspicion of our views, in regard to our mission to England, so impressive upon my arrival, but which I had hoped was eradicated; and, the more earnestly I pressed an accommodation with my demands, the more obviously did this motive present itself to my view." — p. 11.

This has been the game, which the French have uniformly played to parry justice.

"Nor did France invite us to the war, or manifest a wish that we should engage in it; whilst she was disposed to assist us in securing our claims upon those powers, against whom we complained of injuries." — p. 17.

France never invited us, it is true, to go to war; nor in explicit terms expressed a wish, that we should do so; but can any thing be more apparent, than that she was endeavouring with all her arts to lead or force us into it?

"In promising to communicate to the Committee the contents of this treaty as soon as I knew them, I did so in the expectation of fulfilling my promise, when I received a copy of the treaty from the department of state, and not before; for I expected no further information upon that subject from Mr. Jay." — p. 18.

This declaration cannot be reconciled with the various attempts, which he made to obtain it, both from Mr. Jay and Mr. Pinckney, for the information of the French government before it was known to his own.

"As he [Mr. Jay] had refused to send me a copy of the treaty, according to my request, by Mr Purviance, and omitted, not to say refused (though indeed I understood his omission in the light of a refusal) otherwise to inform me of its contents by that very safe opportunity, I did not see how the correspondence could be continued on that subject, on his part." — p. 20.

No one else will think it extraordinary, that he should refuse a copy for the declared purpose of laying it before the French government, and yet be disposed to inform him *in confidence* of the contents thereof, thereby to enable him to remove unfavorable impressions. Nor is it extraordinary, that Mr. Jay should au-

thorize *his own secretary*, who had been privy to all the proceedings, to make this communication, whilst he refused to commit himself to Mr. Purviance, let his character have been what it would.

"Such was my conduct upon the above occasion, and such the motives of it." — p. 22.

And extraordinary indeed it was!

"In this he [the Secretary of State] notices my address to the Convention; as also my letter to the Committee of Public Safety of the 3d of September following; both of which acts he censures in the most unreserved and harsh manner. In the first he charges me with having expressed a solicitude for the welfare of the French Republic in a style too warm and affectionate, much more so than my instructions warranted; which too he deemed the more reprehensible, from the consideration, that it was presented to the Convention *in public and before the world*, and not to *a committee in a private chamber;* since thereby, he adds, we were likely to give offence to other countries, *particularly England, with whom we were in treaty;* and since, also, the dictates *of sincerity do not require that we should publish to the world all our feelings in favor of France.*" — p. 23.

And would it not have been more consistent with our declaration of neutrality?

"For the future, he instructs me to cultivate the French Republic with *zeal*, but without any unnecessary *éclat;* and by my letter to the Committee, demanding an indemnity for spoliations, and a repeal of the decrees suspending the execution of certain articles of our treaty of commerce with France, he objects that I had yielded an interest it was my duty to secure." — p. 23.

No reasoning can justify the measure; no circumstances warrant his relinquishment of our rights.

"Upon this occasion I thought proper, in reply to his first charge, to lay open, more fully than I had before done, some truths, at which, indeed, I had before only glanced; particularly the light in which our administration was viewed by the Committee upon my arrival." — p. 23.

If the fact was so, the relating thereof ought to have accompanied the discovery, that the effect might have been counteracted. These after and time-serving relations do not tell well.

"It would be painful to go into details on this subject; but the circumstances here hinted will make it easy to conceive the

unfavorable inferences, that must have been drawn respecti temper and views of our administration." — p. 24.

It has been noted already, that Mr. Morris was appointe ister during the reign of Louis the Sixteenth, long bef confinement. How then can this charge apply? After under the fluctuating counsels and changes which succ even the acuteness and wisdom of a Monroe might have But the principal cause of their objection to Mr. Morri that he claimed the fulfilment of the treaty, and restitution damages we had sustained by the violation of it, with firmn perseverance; to do which by *deeds* as well as *words* was no intention.

"To express sentiments in private, which it was wished not become public, appeared to me a strange doctrine avowed by the administration of a free people; especially was known that the sentiments, thus expressed, were in ha with those of the people, and with those publicly and fr expressed by the representatives of the people." — p. 25.

The great and primary object of the administration was serve the nation in peace, by pursuing a conduct strictly n It was not essential, then, knowing beforehand with what the reception was to be, to make a parade of sentiments, h strongly they might be felt, and however pleasing to one which might create unpleasant feelings in other nations, with we were also in peace, and wished to remain so.

"Well satisfied I am, that France declined taking then Floridas] in her treaty with Spain, which soon followed, fear it might weaken her connexion with the United S — p. 27.

Guess work this, and not at all probable from that moti

"Had that treaty, then, never passed, and had we also wise preserved the ground upon which we stood with that in the commencement of its revolution, what might we not expected from its friendship?" — p. 27.

Nothing; if she did not perceive some advantage to hers granting it.

"The prospect therefore of success in that important co was now as fair as it could be." — p. 27.

This would all have been ascribed to France, if that g ment had had the least agency in the negotiation.

"Mr. Pinckney was aware of the benefit which would b rived from such aid; but yet did not consider himself at l

to obtain it by showing a copy of Mr. Jay's treaty, which I intimated might be necessary completely to remove the doubts, that were entertained in that respect, and therefore deemed it most suitable to say nothing to the Committee upon the subject of his mission." — p. 28.

Here again is another attempt to possess the French government of the treaty before the ratification, and after repeated declarations of the impropriety of the measure.

"It would at least have greatly embarrassed the administration to explain the cause of such a phenomenon to its credit; notwithstanding the advantage thereby gained to the public." — p. 28.

Indeed! When his instructions required him to ask it!

"By these letters it appeared, that Mr. Jay had concluded a treaty upon other principles, than those to which his powers were restricted, as inferred from my instructions, and, of course, that the nature and object of his mission to England had been misrepresented, through me, to the French government." — p. 29.

The instructions warranted no such conclusion, nor could the government be responsible for his want of discernment, and consequent misrepresentations.

"That the administration had injured me, was a point upon which I had no doubt; that it had likewise compromised its own credit, and with it that of the United States, was also a truth equally obvious to my mind." — p. 30.

But not so in *either case* to an impartial and discriminating mind.

"I assured him, however, that I should continue to endeavour to inspire the French government with a confidence, either that the treaty contained nothing improper, or would not be ratified in case it did." — p. 31.

Solicitous always to get hold of the treaty prematurely for the use of the French government, he omits no opportunity of expressing his chagrin at his disappointment; and would have wished to see the executive of the United States as indiscreetly forward as himself in promulgating it, before it had been submitted to the Senate. How can he reconcile this conduct to the practice of the French government? Can he produce an instance of its making a treaty public before it was ratified? If not, why has he pressed it on his own? Could secrecy, in matters of this sort, be proper in that government, and improper in ours?

"At the moment, however, when Mr. Barlow was upon the point of embarking with our presents, &c., intelligence was received that a M-. D---ld. whom Colonel Humphreys had left

at Alicant with a conditional power, but in the expectati he would not proceed in the business till he heard furth him, had passed over to Algiers and concluded a treaty w regency, and of course without the aid of France; an ended our application to the French government for its support of our negotiations with those powers, and nearly same manner as that did, which I made for its aid in sup our negotiation with Spain." — p. 32.

Mr. Donaldson was by Colonel Humphreys instructed ceed to Alicant, and act according to circumstances. A able moment occurred, and he was advised, by perso acquainted with the state of matters at Algiers and th policy of the Dey, to embrace it. He did so, and happi ceeded. But not in the way most agreeable to Mr. Mon it was effected without the agency of the French; notwiths that agency, according to the advices Donaldson received, at that moment have been injurious.

"From this period I had but one object to attend to, t ervation of our actual footing with France, which was, ready shown, as favorable as we could wish it to be." — p

Except suspicions, doubts, and the bugbear treaty, whic always at hand, and brought forward when our claims were p although the contents of that treaty were unknown, and assu were given that their rights were saved.

"By me it was never introduced; for, as I had no new c nication to make to the Committee upon it, whereby to rem suspicions that were entertained of its contents, and any to it in that state could of course only serve to revive unp sensations to our disadvantage, I thought it most eligible t it out of view." — p. 33.

That is one of the material charges against him; for, al he had himself given suspicions, doubts, and discontentm above mentloned, and was possessed with the sentiments government relative thereto, with the intention to remove he keeps these out of view until he is informed that the Di have made up their mind on the subject.

"It was soon obvious that this aggression of Great Britai the rights of neutral nations, being made with the intent crease the distress of famine which was then raging at Par thereby promote the disorders which were in part attribut that cause, excited a ferment in the French councils, which pointed against Great Britain alone." — pp. 33, 34.

The conduct of Great Britain in this instance was extremely reprehensible, and was one of the motives for sending an envoy to that country; but it was no justification of the wrongs we received from France, with whom we had a treaty that was infracted by the measure.

"About the middle of August, 1795, American gazettes were received at Paris, containing copies of the English treaty, whereby its contents were made known to the committee of public safety without my aid. From this period, therefore, all mystery upon that subject was at an end. The possession of the treaty enabled the French government to judge for itself upon all the points which it involved. Nor was the effect which it produced an equivocal one; for there did not appear to me to be a description of persons, not in the interest of the coalesced powers, who did not openly and severely censure it." — p. 34.

They were predetermined to do so, and took the tone from their partisans on this side of the water.

"But as yet it was not known that the treaty was ratified, nor certain that it would be, for the spontaneous and almost universal disapprobation that was bestowed upon it throughout the United States, as soon as it was seen, was sufficient at least to inspire a doubt on that point." — p. 35.

He should have said, *before it was seen*, for it is a well-known fact, that the opposition from the French party in the United States began, and writing commenced against it, as soon as it was known that the treaty had been concluded, and before one article therein was known to any of those writers. No more evident proof, therefore, can be given, that it was not the *contents* of the treaty, but that a treaty should be formed, which, putting an end to the disputes between the United States and Great Britain, put an end also to the hopes and expectations of our embarking in the war on the part of France; — this, and this only, was the source of all the discontents, which have appeared on this occasion.

"The appearance of the treaty excited the general disgust of France against the American government, which was now diminished by the opposition which the American people made to the treaty." — pp. 35, 36.

Who were the contrivers of this disgust, and for what purpose was it excited? Let the French party in the United States, and the British debtors therein, answer the question.

"The letter of June 1st contained a justification of the con-

duct of the administration in forming a commercial trea
Great Britain at that period; and likewise a vindication
administration against the charge of a want of candor
seemed to be apprehended) in the explanations that were
by it of the motives of that mission; in which the ide
commercial power was always withheld." — p. 37.

This never would nor could have been *apprehended*, not been seen, that the enemies of the government were mined to have it so considered. How *withheld?* Is it u was it necessary, to publish to the world all the points on the negotiation was to turn? His own conduct evinces discreet it would have been to have intrusted him with th

"The letter of July 2d contained advice, that the trea not ratified, and that the President was undecided upon th of ratification." — p. 37.

Upon no other ground, than that of the subsequent con Great Britain relative to the Provision Order, so called.

"It was inferred from these letters, that, when that 1st was written, the executive had resolved to ratify the t case the Senate approved it, and that the hesitation whic wards took place proceeded more from the shock, wh general disapprobation of the treaty by the people gave ministration, than from any disinclination on its own part ratification." — p. 38.

A mistake, *in toto*. The *hesitation*, as mentioned befo ceeded from the Provision Order, for it was obvious to t discerning, that an opposition by the French party had b solved on at all events, and had actually commenced b single article of the treaty was known; and the blaze, w describes, broke out before it was possible to consider i hundredth part of its opposers had ever read it.

"It was likewise inferred, that that *letter* was written view to lay the foundation for such an event, in the expe the ratification would probably embroil us with France." —

It was well conceived, that there was nothing in the which ought to embroil this country with France.

"In one particular the contents of this letter affected sonally, by affirming that my instructions had not warran construction I had given them, in explaining, as I had de motives of Mr. Jay's mission to London." — p. 38.

And *affirmed* it, too, upon solid ground.

"Of the symptoms of discontent, which I witnessed, I fore given frequent intimations." — p. 40.

True; but without availing himself effectually as he ought of the means, with which he was furnished, to remove it.

"Finally he proceeds to lay down certain positions, to which, he says, I may give the solemnity of truths; such as, that the late negotiation did not proceed from any predilection in our government towards England; that the remembrance of the last war, from which we just began to recover, made us deprecate whatever even seemed to look like a renewal of it." — pp. 42, 43.

What means did he want? Did he expect to be authorized to declare the government was in an error, in having made a treaty without first obtaining the consent of France; and to ask pardon for not having submitted Mr. Jay's instructions to the rulers of that country before it was ratified?

"Acts of candor when performed, if acknowledged by the party to whom they are said to be rendered, ought not to be boasted of by those who perform them." — p. 43.

Why not, if the fact *was* admitted, allow the American government to adopt *some* of the *all-perfect* maxims of the French? It will not be denied, that, to boast of what they do, and even of what they do not do, is one of them.

"Indeed it professes to notice, and in fact notices, only one article, the 18th, and in so doing, admits in effect all the objections that were urged against it." — p. 43.

This is denied; we could not yield a thing of which we were never possessed, and which it was not in our power to obtain; nor was there any permission given, that the British did not claim and exercise before under the law of nations.

"Would the administration, in a demand of payment for those seizures, which took place after the treaty was concluded, distinguish the cases, and confine that demand to such vessels as were taken in their route to a blockaded port, saying, 'For these only will we be paid, but for the others, comprehending perhaps ninety-nine out of a hundred, we will not;' and thus revive the controversy, which it was said was thus amicably closed? This, it is presumed, would not be done." — p. 44.

Did the treaty with Great Britain surrender any right, of which the United States had been in possession? Did it make any change or alteration in the law of nations, under which Great Britain had acted in defiance of all the powers of Europe? Or did it give her any authority to seize provision vessels contrary to that law? If none of these, why all this farrago, but to sow the seeds of discontent by imposing upon the uninformed?

"With respect to the declaration, that we were an *inde* *people*, and had a *right to decide for ourselves*, &c., so of peated, I did not perceive how it applied at the time; the been no question on that point that I knew of." — p. 45.

None are more dull, than those who will not perceive. I was no question of this sort, whence proceeded the disc before the treaty was promulgated, and after repeated ass had been given, that nothing contained in it infracted o gagements with that country?

"France had attempted to impose on us no conditions asked of us no favors; on the contrary had shown a dis to render us many; under which circumstances we had t treaty with Britain." — p. 45.

There the shoe pinches. This treaty defeated all hope barking this country in the war on the part of France, a came a death-warrant to its hopes.

"To reconcile France to that treaty, I expected to hav authorized to explain to her government how long the com part was to remain in force; to state it formally, that w ready to enter into a new commercial treaty with her, an what principles, to be commenced either in Paris or Phila In which expectation, and with a view to the event of a t tion, I had told the administration, when I advised it of effect the treaty, whose contents were then known, had pro that I should await its orders without any the slightest c mitment either of it or myself." — p. 45.

What obligation was there on us, if independent, to acc a foreign nation for the proceedings of our own governmen why press upon France a wish to enter into a new com treaty, when our readiness to do so (as he knew from correspondence) had been declared at different times and rious ways? Was this the way to obtain one on good ter

"But it was my duty to answer this letter, which I did w a comment; for it was improper for me to censure, and to advise." — p. 46.

When a rational answer and good reason cannot be gi is not unusual to be silent.

"I showed, it is true, no mark of undue condescension government." — p. 46.

Few will be of this opinion, who read this book.

"Those considerations appeared to me to be so stron pressing, that I concluded, as soon as they were brought

view of the administration, he [Mr. Parish] would be removed, and of course that the measure was already taken. In which expectation I answered the minister politely, intimating that I should communicate to our government the request of his in that respect, not doubting that it would be readily complied with." — p. 47.

Upon the first intimation of misconduct in Mr. Parish, an inquiry into it was instituted; but Mr. Monroe, as it was the will of the French government, would have had him discharged without a hearing. But when another consul of the United States was as highly charged with acts equally repugnant to neutrality, in favor of France, he could find nothing amiss in his conduct.

"The subsequent management of the affair upon the application of the French government showed, that the incident became rather a cause of irritation, than of conciliation with that government; notwithstanding the evident impolicy of such a procedure at the time, on account of the crisis to which we were brought. For, although the administration (not being able to resist the objections to his continuance) did remove him, yet it was done in a manner so as to show the French government it was not done in compliance with its request." — p. 47.

A candid explanation of a motive is here deemed a cause for irritation, notwithstanding the request is complied with.

"Much, too, was said in that address of the advantage of our accommodation with Britain, as likewise of the favorable disposition of that power towards us, without the slightest attention being shown to the French Republic." — p. 48.

To state facts for the information of Congress, and not to write eulogiums on the French nation and conduct, was the object of the then President. If Mr. Monroe should ever fill the chair of government, he may (and it is presumed he would be well enough disposed) let the French minister frame his speeches.

"Unless indeed it was referred to in the picture of distress above noticed, as was inferred by the French government, as I understood from good authority at the time." — p. 48.

If the cap did not fit, why put it on?

"In the course of the year 1795, the French government had repealed, as already shown, all the decrees which were passed during the mission of Mr. Morris, under which our trade had been harassed." — p. 48.

But has our suffering commerce received any compensation? And why was not this urged with firmness, agreeably to his instructions?

"Yet none of those acts, or of the disposition which pr them, were even glanced at in the President's address to Co although it was to be inferred, such notice would have pr a good effect, and although it was then as just as it was to notice them." — p. 48.

What! Declare to the world in a public speech, that w going to treat with *this* and *that* nation, and that France assist us! Insanity in the extreme!

"This conduct in the administration was the more ex nary, from the consideration that those decrees, by whose au our trade was harassed, with the harassment itself, had be nounced in former communications to the Congress, wh British depredations were announced." — p. 48.

Could this refusal be announced before it was known?

"Under such circumstances, it was impossible for me t ceed in conciliating the French government towards the treaty, since my efforts were not only not seconded in that by our administration, but absolutely counteracted by it." —

In what respect *counteracted?*

"Nevertheless I continued to pursue the same line of co that I had done before, being resolved not to relax in my however unsuccessful I might be." — p. 48.

That is not doubted; but for what purposes were they ex

"The sequel of my mission exhibits an interesting but p spectacle, the distinguishing characteristics whereof are avowed decision of the French government to take some m towards us in consequence of our treaty with England, as trated by many examples; with my efforts to prevent any measure taking effect; and the attack made on me by our a istration, upon pretexts equally unjust, frivolous, and ab — p. 49.

An impartial public will be enabled, from his own showi decide, more correctly than he has done, how far these senti are just.

"On the 15th of February, 1796, I called on the minist foreign affairs to state to him the distress of many of our cit merchants at Paris, on account of their claims upon the F government, with a view to engage his aid for their r but was immediately diverted from that object by inform which he gave me, that the Directory had at length made mind how to act in regard to our treaty with England; wh considered as having annulled our treaty of alliance with Fr

from the period of its ratification; and had appointed or intended to appoint an envoy extraordinary, to repair to Philadelphia to remonstrate against it; adding that he was ordered to send me an official note upon the subject, which he should accordingly do." — p. 49.

It not suiting the French government to pay, (and knowing the trim of our minister) or something else, was always played off to silence his application.

"I attended him again on the day following, and remonstrated most earnestly against the measure, urging every argument that I could avail myself of to divert the government from it; offering to enter with him, whenever he thought fit, into a discussion of his objections to our treaty, or any other act of our government; assuring him, that I should not only be always ready to enter with him into such explanations, but in the present instance should do it with pleasure, since, by being possessed of our view of the subject, they would be better able to decide whether the complaint was well or ill founded, and of course how far it merited to be considered in that light." — p. 49.

Had he applied the means in time, with which he was furnished, matters might not have come to this.

"Upon this occasion, as upon the preceding one, the minister declined stating any specific objections to the treaty, or any other act of our government, and therefore I could make no specific defence." — p. 49.

Declined for the best reason in the world, because he had none that would bear the test of examination.

"A summary of those complaints was presented to me by the minister of foreign affairs." — p. 50.

And is there a candid and well-informed man to be met with, who will carefully compare this summary of complaints with our treaties with France and Great Britain, and these again with the laws of nations, and not pronounce them the most futile that can be conceived to come from a nation, who would be thought to act upon principles of independence and justice?

"From the period of my audience by the Directory, and more especially after my communication with the minister of foreign affairs was handed in, I had frequent conferences with several of the members of the Directory, in which I labored to promote the same object, and at one time, as I thought, with complete success: being informed by a member, upon one of those occasions, that the Directory had done nothing towards us in regard to its complaints, and he presumed would not." — p. 51.

Neither the constitution, nor laws, nor usage, renders i sary for the executive to assign his reasons. It is his see the laws (and treaties are paramount to all others) e and the interests of the United States promoted. If, agent of his appointment is found incompetent, remiss in or pursuing wrong courses, it becomes his indispensable remove him from office; otherwise he would be responsibl consequences. Such was Mr. Monroe in the estimatio President upon trial of him.

"These were the only letters, which I received from partment of state on that subject, after the treaty was s to the Senate; or indeed before, except such as showed tuating state of the executive mind respecting the ratif — p. 56.

The executive mind never fluctuated for a moment on t ground, than that of the Provision Order of Great Brit the treaty had been concluded on.

"The first of these facts, it is true, was not then k the Secretary; for as the object, at that time contemp the Committee, was not pursued, on account I presum change of government which took place immediately a in France, and might possibly never be revived, I declin tioning it to our administration from motives of delicacy governments; wishing, if to be avoided, that no such of the discontent of France should appear in my correspo — p. 56.

If it was not known, on what ground was the admi to have formed a judgment? Is not this keeping his c ernment uninformed, and in ignorance of facts; and of neglect of duty?

"I believe no instance can be adduced by the admin of any counsel being asked or attention shown on its pa counsels of the French nation, from the commencement administration to the present day, nor to the counsels o ister of that nation; one instance only excepted, in w counsel was asked, but immediately rejected." — p. 57.

To have asked counsel would have been improper. Th alluded to requires explanation; none is recollected.

"In short he seems to have concluded, from the mom letters were forwarded to me, that he had put that natio my care, and, if I did not keep *it* in order, that I meri sure." — p. 57.

It was undoubtedly supposed, that every nation would be governed by its own contracts and principles of justice. When, then, they departed from these, and a representation thereof was made, the expectation surely was not unreasonable, that they would do what was incumbent on both.

"I shall only observe upon it, that, had I been called on for a proof of my activity and zeal to preserve tranquillity between the two countries, I should have urged the delay of the French government to complain, discontented as it was, as a most satisfactory one. Indeed I do not know, before the government did complain, how I could produce any other." — p. 58.

How does this accord with his frequent communications of their complaints, on which the letters he alludes to were founded?

"My efforts produced an effect for a certain term only." — p. 58.

What effect? Have our citizens received compensation for the injurious spoliations they have sustained? Was it deemed a boon to obtain by weak, feeble, and suppliant addresses, a repeal of *arrêts*, the passing of which was a violation of their treaty with us?

"A sufficient one, however, to have permitted the administration to interpose and assist me." — p. 58.

And what interposition was expected from the administration? Did he expect that it was to have annulled the treaty, ask pardon for having made it, and inquire of France what more she required?

"The course which I pursued was a plain one." — p. 59.

So it is believed, for the object he had in view, but not for the object of his mission, nor for the honor and dignity of his country.

"Yet it was known, that the French government was jealous of the object of the mission, which produced that treaty, from the period of its nomination; that it suspected the treaty was founded upon principles injurious to France before its contents were seen; and that those suspicions were confirmed when they were seen." — p. 59.

Could it be expected by France, that this country would neglect its own interest; would suffer all the evils (nearly) arising from a state of warfare, without any effort to obtain justice? And this too, because, as she might *suspect*, we were doing something wrong, after assurance had been given in the commencement, that her rights should be saved? Why has France expected so much from us? Has she made us privy to any of her acts and doings?

Has she before, or after, communicated what she meant to had done, in treaties? Powerful as she is, we are as inde as France.

"Whether I contributed in any degree to divert the government from opposing the ratification of that treaty, or its measures after the treaty was ratified, I will not pret say." — p. 59.

It is believed the truth here would not bear to be told, the boast would not be wanting.

"To determine this latter point, some attention is due conduct of the administration through every stage of thi pean controversy; for the whole of its conduct forms a which ought to be taken together, to judge correctly of tives in any particular case." — p. 60.

Is this to be decided by assertion or official documents? latter, why call this book, "*A View of the Conduct of the tive of the United States*," when it relates only to the co dence with him? If to the former, is it to be judged of ignorant, partial, and party representations?

"The first is, the appointment of a person as ministe potentiary to France, in the commencement of the French tion, who was known to be an enemy to that revolution, partisan of royalty; whereby the name and weight of A (no inconsiderable thing at that time in that respect) was into the scale of kings, against that of the people and of l — p. 60.

Was not France (as has been observed before) at the ti long after Mr. Morris's appointment, a monarchy? Whate have been his political sentiments, he pursued steadily the and integrity of his country with zeal and ability, and w spectful firmness asserted its rights. Had Mr. Monroe do same, we should not have been in the situation we now a

"It being known that, with other members of the Se had opposed in many instances the measures of the adm tion, particularly in that of the mission of Mr. Morris to l and of Mr. Jay to London; from the apprehension those n would produce, in our foreign relations, precisely the ill they did produce." — pp. 60, 61.

Unpardonable to appoint men to office, although of ac edged first-rate abilities, when they were of different politic timents from Mr. Monroe, whose judgment, one would pr must be infallible.

"The instructions that were given me, to explain to the French government the motives of Mr. Jay's mission to London, not as an act of condescension on our part, at the demand of the French government, but of policy, *to produce tranquillity and give satisfaction*, whilst the negotiation was depending; by which instructions, if the existence of a power to form a commercial treaty was not positively denied, yet *it* was withheld, and the contrary evidently implied." — p. 61.

None but a person incompetent to judge, or blinded by party views, could have misconstrued as he did. But had France a right to be made acquainted with the private instructions of our ministers?

"The strong documents, that were put in my possession at that period, by the administration, of its attachment to France and the French Revolution; so different from any thing before expressed." — p. 61.

From which he has exhibited nothing to prove a departure, but the contrary, from his references.

"The resentment shown by the administration on account of the publication of those documents; it having been intended they should *produce* their effect, *at the same time*, and yet be kept *secret*." — p. 61.

Because it was as unnecessary, as it was impolitic, to make a parade of them.

"The approbation bestowed on me by the administration when I made vehement pressures on the French government for a repeal of its decrees, under which our commerce was harassed, exhibiting a picture of its spoliations, &c.; and the profound silence and inattention of the administration, when those decrees were repealed, and a disposition shown by that government to assist us in other cases." — p. 61.

No vehement expressions were ever used. But, supposing it, is it singular to commend a person for doing his duty? Did the complying with a demand of justice require it, when our rights had been outrageously violated by a departure from it? The offer of aid to promote our views with Spain and Algiers was friendly, and, if any benefit had been derived from it, thanks would have followed.

"The power given to Mr. Jay to form a commercial treaty with England, in the midst of a war, by a special mission, at a time when no such advance was made to treat on that subject with France, and her advances at best coolly received." — p. 61.

The first we had a right to do, and the second is den advances had been made repeatedly.

"The withholding from me the contents of that trea after the meeting of the Senate; notwithstanding the em ment to which I was in the interim personally exposed, sequence of the explanations I had before given to the government, by order of the administration, of the motive mission which produced it; which deportment proves clea the administration did not deal fairly with me from the cor ment." — p. 61.

None but a party man, lost to all sense of propriety, cou asked such a thing, and no other would have brought into such a predicament.

"The submission of the treaty to M. Adet after the a the Senate, before the ratification of the President; at when, as it appears by satisfactory documents, it was to ratify it; which submission therefore was probably no to obtain M. Adet's counsel, in which light it would ha improper, especially as it had been withheld from his gove but to repel an objection to the candor of the administra its conduct in preceding stages." — p. 61.

And what motive could be more candid or laudable, o stronger argument of the executive's belief of its fairness France? To ask M. Adet's advice would have been strange

"The character of the treaty itself, by which (accor the administration) we have departed from the modern contraband, with respect to many articles made free by treaties." — p. 62.

The treaty in this respect leaves things precisely upon t ing they were before, with an explanation favorable to the States, and not injurious to France.

"The conduct of the administration after the ratificat the treaty, being in all cases irritable towards France." —

In what instances irritable? Upon a just interpretation i not offend France. But it was known at the same tim there were the most unjustifiable means used to make i this effect.

"I should not notice my recall, being in itself a circum too *trivial* to merit attention, if it were not for the state in our affairs were in my hands, when my recall was decided; at a period, when it appeared I had succeeded in quieti French government for the time, and was likely to do it e ally." — p. 62.

For this there is no better proof, than his own opinion; whilst there is abundant evidence of his being a mere tool in the hands of the French government, cajoled and led away always by unmeaning assurances of friendship.

"To be left there to that precise time, and then withdrawn and censured, seems to authorize a presumption, that I was left there in the first instance in the expectation I would not defend that treaty, and in consequence whereof a rupture would ensue, and recalled afterwards, when it was known I had done my duty, and was likely to prevent a rupture." — p. 62.

The contrary of all this appears from his own work, I mean the official part of it.

"Whether the nature of this crisis contributed in any degree to influence our measures, by repelling us from France and attracting us towards England, is submitted for others to determine." — p. 63.

As he has such a happy knack at determining, he ought not to have let this opportunity escape him.

"Be this, however, as it may, it is nevertheless obvious, that the policy itself was at best short-sighted and bad." — p. 63.

Posterity will judge of this. Mr. Monroe's opinion is not the standard by which it will judge.

"To stand well with France, through the whole of this European war, was the true interest of America; since great advantage was to be derived from it in many views, and no injury in any." — p. 63.

But to stand well with France was, in other words, to quit neutral ground, and disregard every other consideration, relying wholly on that nation; and this was what Monroe was aiming at.

"For, if she was conquered, it did not seem likely, that we should accomplish any of our objects with those powers; nor could we profit by her success otherwise than by preserving a good understanding with her." — p. 64.

Every reasonable and just measure, consistent with the neutral policy of this government and approved by the people, has been adopted to preserve a good understanding with France; but nothing short of hostility with Great Britain can accomplish this.

"The beneficial effects, too, of this stipulation, which was respected by France at the time that treaty passed, was most sensibly felt upon our navigation and commerce; for, in consequence of it, we were then become the principal carriers of the enemies of France." — p. 64.

Was this observed by France any longer than it suited her convenience? Has she not *herself* declared the contrary in explicit language?

"It was highly for the interest of America to improve our footing in that commerce; and easy was it to have done so, had due attention been paid to the necessary means of improving it." — p. 64.

These, it is presumed, were what he had suggested, namely, measures which must inevitably have led to war with Great Britain.

"Nor was it difficult to stand well with France through the whole of this crisis, and profit by her fortunes, without the smallest possible loss or even hazard. The demonstration of this position is complete; for we know, that, although our ground was once lost by the administration in the course of the present war, it was nevertheless afterwards recovered; although it is much easier to preserve a friendship, whilst at the height, than to recover it after it is gone." — p. 64.

Here is a pretty smart compliment paid to himself at the expense of the administration; but the truth of the case is, that, while France cajoled him by unmeaning compliments and promises, which cost them nothing, he conceived his influence to be such as to command any thing; when, on the other hand, urged by the orders he received to press for the restitution of our captured property, they alarmed him with their discontents and his efforts stood suspended, these discontents were charged to the administration.

"And how was it recovered? Not by any address on my part, for I pretend to none." — p. 65.

Strange indeed! When by his adroit management he has parried the evils, which the weakness or wickedness of the executive was likely to involve this country in during the whole of his ministry! But is it uncharitable to ask Mr. Monroe for the instances, by which the documents to which he alludes have been counteracted by the administration? For it would puzzle him, or any one else, to find a sentiment in the whole of the Secretary of State's letters to him repugnant thereto. Surely the reclamation of property unlawfully captured, and not abrogating, as he was disposed to do, important articles of the treaty, cannot stand in the catalogue of misdeeds. It is conceived, that he has by mistake laid his hands upon the letters of Mr. Bache, Dr. Logan, or some other of that class of correspondents, and, attending more to the contents and his wishes, than to the signature, has realized their surmise.

"Nor did we hazard any thing in any view by standing well with France, whilst much was to be gained. The administration admits she did not wish us to embark in the war. Perhaps this was admitted to preclude the claim of merit for not wishing it." — p. 65.

France might not have wished us to embark in the war by an absolute declaration of it; but she and Mr. Monroe also did every thing in their power to induce us to pursue measures, which must inevitably have produced it.

"Such was the situation of America in the commencement of this war! Such our standing with the French nation, so advantageous in itself, so easy to preserve! And yet all these advantages have been thrown away; and, instead of that secure and tranquil state, which we might have enjoyed throughout, we have been likewise plunged, so far as the administration could plunge us, into a war with our ancient ally, and on the side of the kings of Europe contending against her for the subversion of liberty!

"Had France been conquered, to what objects that administration would have aspired, has fortunately by her victories been left a subject for conjecture only." — p. 65.

An insinuation as impudent as it is unfounded.

"We might have stood well with France, avoiding all the losses we have sustained from her; enjoying the benefit of the principles of free trade, and even appeared as an advocate for those principles, and without going to any extremity." — p. 66.

Not by pursuing the modes he suggested.

"And instead of a situation so advantageous, so honorable, so satisfactory to our country, what is that into which our government has conducted us?" — p. 66.

The *French party*, he should have said, had he spoken properly.

"Long will it be before we shall be able to forget what we are, nor will centuries suffice to raise us to the high ground from which we have fallen." — p. 66.

And to accomplish which Mr. Monroe has been a principal actor.

No. XI. pp. 257, 261, 263, 303.

LETTERS RESPECTING THE APPOINTMENT OF GEORGE WASHINGTON AS COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PROVISIONAL ARMY.

TIMOTHY PICKERING TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 6 July, 1798.

SIR,

My attachment to my country, and my desire to promote its best interests, I trust were never equivocal; and at this time I feel extreme anxiety, that our *army* should be organized in the most efficient manner. The enemy, whom we are now preparing to encounter, veterans in arms, led by able and active officers, and accustomed to victory, must be met by the best blood, talents, energy, and experience, that our country can produce. Great military abilities are the portion of but few men in any nation, even the most populous and warlike. How very few, then, may we expect to find in the United States? In them the arrangements should so be made that not one may be lost.

There is one man, who will gladly be *your second;* but who will not, I presume, because I think he ought not, be the second to any other military commander in the United States. You too well know Colonel Hamilton's distinguished ability, energy, and fidelity, to apply my remark to any other man. But, to insure his appointment, I apprehend the weight of your opinion may be necessary. From the conversation that I and others have had with the President, there appears to us to be a disinclination to put Colonel Hamilton in what we think is his proper station, and that alone in which we suppose he will serve; the *second* to you, and the *chief* in *your absence.* In any war, and especially in such a war as now impends, a commander-in-chief ought to know and have a confidence in the officers most essential to insure success to his measures. In a late conversation with the President, I took the liberty to observe, that, the army in question not being yet raised, the only material object to be contemplated in the early appointment of the commander-in-chief would be, that he might be consulted, because he ought to be satisfied in the choice of the principal officers who should serve under him.

If any considerations should prevent your taking the command of the army, I deceive myself extremely if you will not think it

should be conferred on Colonel Hamilton. And in this case it may be equally important as in the former, that you should intimate your opinion to the President. Even Colonel Hamilton's political enemies, I believe, would repose more confidence in him than in any military character, that can be placed in competition with him.

This letter is in its nature confidential, and therefore can procure me the displeasure of no one; but the appointment of Colonel Hamilton, in the manner suggested, appears of such vast importance to the welfare of the country, that I am willing to risk any consequences of my frank and honest endeavours to secure it. On this ground I assure myself you will pardon the freedom of this address. I am, with perfect respect, Sir, &c.

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

P. S. Mr. McHenry is to set off to-morrow, or on Monday, bearing your commission.

PRESIDENT ADAMS TO JAMES MCHENRY.

Philadelphia, 6 July, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

It is my desire, that you embrace the first opportunity to set out on your journey to Mount Vernon, and wait on General Washington with the commission of lieutenant-general and commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States, which, by the advice and consent of the Senate, has been signed by me.

The reasons and motives, which prevailed with me to venture on such a step as the nomination of this great and illustrious character, whose voluntary resignation alone occasioned my introduction to the office I now hold, were too numerous to be detailed in this letter, and are too obvious and important to escape the observation of any part of America or Europe. But, as it is a movement of great delicacy, it will require all your address to communicate the subject in a manner, that shall be inoffensive to his feelings, and consistent with all the respect that is due from me to him.

If the General should decline the appointment, all the world will be silent and respectfully acquiesce. If he should accept it, all the world, except the enemies of this country, will rejoice. If he should come to no decisive determination, but take the subject into consideration, I shall not appoint any other lieutenant-general till his conclusion is known.

His advice in the formation of a list of officers would be ex-

tremely desirable to me. The names of Lincoln, Morg Hamilton, Gates, Pinckney, Lee, Carrington, Hand, Mc Dayton, Burr, Brooks, Cobb, Smith, as well as the commander-in-chief, may be mentioned to him, and a that occur to you. Particularly I wish to have his opini men most suitable for inspector-general, adjutant-gene quartermaster-general.

His opinion on all subjects would have great weight, a you to obtain from him as much of his reflections upon and the service as you can. Wishing you a pleasant j speedy return, and improved health, I am with great este Sir, your most obedient servant,

JOHN A

PRESIDENT ADAMS TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 7 Jul

DEAR SIR,

Mr. McHenry, the Secretary of War, will have the hon on you, in my behalf, to impart to you a step I have ver take, and which I should have been happy to have comm in person, if such a journey had been at this time in m As I said in a former letter, if it had been in my power nate you to be President of the United States, I should h it with less hesitation and more pleasure. My reasons measure will be too well known to need any explanatio public. Every friend and every enemy of America will hend them at first blush. To you, Sir, I owe all the ap can make. The urgent necessity I am in of your advice sistance, indeed of your conduct and direction of the wa I can urge, and that is a sufficient justification to myself world. I hope it will be so considered by yourself. Mr. M will have the honor to consult you upon the organization army, and upon every thing relating to it.

With the highest respect, I have the honor to be, Si most obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN AD

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

8 July,

DEAR SIR,

I was much surprised, on my arrival here, to discover th nomination had been without any previous consultation

Convinced of the goodness of the motives, it would be useless to scan the propriety of the step; it is taken, and the question is, What, under the circumstances, ought to be done? I use the liberty, which my attachment to you and to the public authorizes, to offer my opinion, that you should not decline the appointment. It is evident that the public satisfaction at it is lively and universal. It is not to be doubted, that the circumstance will give an additional spring to the public mind, will tend much to unite, and will facilitate the measures which the conjuncture requires. On the other hand, your declining would certainly produce the opposite effects, would throw a great damp upon the ardor of the country, inspiring the idea that the crisis was not really serious or alarming. At least, then, let me entreat you, and in this all your friends, indeed all good citizens, will unite, that, if you do not give an unqualified acceptance, you will accept provisionally, making your entering upon the duties to depend on future events; so that the community may look up to you as their certain commander. But I prefer a simple acceptance.

It may be well, however, to apprize you, that the arrangement of the army may demand your particular attention. The President has no relative ideas, and his prepossessions on military subjects in reference to such a point are of the wrong sort. It is easy for us to have a good army, but the selection requires care. It is necessary to inspire confidence in the efficient part of those, who may incline to military service. Much adherence to routine would do great harm. Men of capacity and exertion in the higher stations are indispensable. It deserves consideration, whether your presence at the seat of government is not necessary. If you accept, it will be conceived that the arrangement is yours, and you will be responsible for it in reputation. This, and the influence of a right arrangement upon future success, seem to require that you should in one mode or another see efficaciously, that the arrangement is such as you would approve.

I remain, dear Sir, your affectionate and obedient servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

JAMES MCHENRY TO PRESIDENT ADAMS.

Mount Vernon, 12 July, 1798.

SIR,

I arrived here yesterday evening, and delivered your letter to the General. I have had much conversation with him, and have now the pleasure to inform you, that I expect to bring you his

acceptance of the appointment, with the proviso that h
be called into activity, till such time as in your opini
stances may render his presence with the army indispen
appears to me to have maturely studied the vast conse
the steps that have been taken, and the importance of
ing, at every hazard, the ground we have assumed. T
perceive, has had its full share of influence in determin
give up the happiness he enjoys in these charming sha

He has shown me the copy of a letter he had writt
and which must have got to Philadelphia the day I
which he treats on several points, that will require your
I have therefore desired it to be delivered to you, and
tain from him the names of the persons he considers
qualified for his confidential officers, without whom I
would not serve.

With the greatest respect,

JAMES Mc]

No. XII. pp. 269, 285, 297, 328.

LETTERS FROM KNOX, HAMILTON, AND PICKERI MILITARY RANK IN THE PROVISIONAL ARMY.

HENRY KNOX TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Boston, 29 July

MY DEAR SIR,

Yesterday I received your favor of the 16th instant,
opened with all the delightful sensations of affection, whic
ways before experienced upon the receipt of your letters.
found on its perusal a striking instance of that vicissitude
man affairs and friendships, which you so justly describe.
it with astonishment, which however subsided in the ref
that few men well know themselves, and therefore that fo
than twenty years I must have been acting under a perf
lusion. Conscious myself of entertaining for you a sincere,
and invariable friendship, I easily believed it was reciprocal
more, I flattered myself with your esteem and respect in a
point of view. But I find that others, greatly my juniors i
have been, upon a scale of comparison, preferred before m

this, perhaps, the world may also concur with you that I have no just reason to complain. But every intelligent and just principle of society required, either that I should have been previously consulted on an arrangement, in which my feelings and happiness have been so much wounded; or that I should not have been dragged forth to public view at all, to make the comparison so conspicuously odious.

I revere the cause of my country far beyond all my powers of description. I am charmed with its honorable and dignified proceedings relatively to foreign nations, under the former and present administrations of the supreme executive, and I shall be proud of an honorable opportunity of sealing the truth of these opinions with my blood. It will be to me a malignant shaft of fate indeed, if I am to be excluded from active service by a constant sense of public insult and injury.

You are pleased to say, that "the first of these" (meaning General Hamilton) "in public estimation, *as declared to me*, is designated to be second in command, with some fears, I confess, of the consequences, although I must acknowledge, at the same time, that I know not where a more competent choice could be made."

It would be absurd in me to complain of an arrangement, already made, with any view to a change. But I cannot refrain from observing, that the question may be asked, how this public estimation was manifested. In Virginia and the southern States? In New England and the middle States? If so, I can only say that such estimation was not *publicly* manifested, and is unknown to me. I have understood, that, when the list was presented to the Senate, some members, from a mere sense of justice, were desirous that the seniority I held the last war should be considered; but they were silenced by the observation, that the list was yours, and therefore it could not be altered. To you *it was declared* to be the public estimation. The conclusion seems to be authorized, if the statement of the Senate be true (for which, however, I cannot at present pledge myself), that there has been a species of management in this affair, of which you are not apprized.

I say nothing relatively to Mr. Pinckney's rank. He will judge for himself. If there be an immediate pressure of an invasion in the southern States, he may submit for a time to the arrangement. But, if no such pressure should exist, I have mistaken his character greatly, if he will accept.

In this case it would appear, that Messrs. Hamilton and Lee

would be the second and third general officers. Ne which must furnish the majority of the army, if o raised, will be without a major-general, or have the Whether they will possess such a sense of inferiority such a state of things patiently, or whether their zeal dence will thereby be excited, time will discover.

I submit fully to the idea, that the period is rapidl ing, when successful resistance, or absolute conques place. The French, with their immense force, will opportunity to elude the English fleets, and to sail wi dable force to this country, either directly, or circuit West Indies. Their black troops from the Islands wi a powerful instrument in the invasion of the southern the well-grounded expectation of exciting the slaves enormities heretofore practised by the negroes of the their former masters. A natural desire of liberty, joi all-powerful operations of ambition, would be irresisti minds of our negroes.

In addition to this project, which I believe is fixe have been informed by a person inducing a degree and which is strongly corroborated by circumstances French agents in New Orleans, Pensacola, and St. Aug and will be busy, to raise the southern Indians to war to seduce the people of Tennessee and Kentucky from giance to the Union.

New York presents a tempting object to an invad experience of the British has stamped an incalculable that place well known to the French. The fortificatio have been and are executing, are of themselves utterly i to the protection and security of that city and Hudson They ought to be combined with small artificial islands manner of the French at Cherbourg. These should str Governor's Island to Bedloe's. Chains should be exten each, absolutely barring all access in the day of dang summits should be crowned with strong batteries for The Narrows should also be fortified, and always stron soned with abundance of troops. If, however, twenty thousand of the enemy should effect a landing on Long the fortifications, unless supported by a superior force in would be nugatory.

If such a train of events should occur, and events less probable have occurred in thick succession for the l

years, all the military energy of America will be required. Then an opportunity may be afforded, in which a better value may be set upon my services than at present, and I may be permitted to exert myself unshackled by any degradation of character.

I have received no other notification of an appointment, than what the newspapers announce. When it shall please the Secretary of War to give me the information, I shall endeavour to make him a suitable answer. At present I do not perceive how it can possibly be to any other purport, than in the negative, unless the relative rank of the late war should govern, according to the established and invariable usage of the former war. The present is suggested to be a new arrangement, and totally irrelative to the former army. The principles of rank were then established by resolves of Congress, as a part of the military law. I am uninformed of any act of the present government, which has repealed the former laws upon the subject of rank. This point, however, may hereafter be more fully investigated.

In whatever situation I shall be, I shall always remember with pleasure and gratitude the friendship and confidence, with which you have heretofore honored me.

I am, with the highest attachment, your obedient servant,

HENRY KNOX.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

New York, 20 August, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

A necessary absence from this city prevented the receipt of your letter of the 9th instant till yesterday. It is very grateful to me to discover, in each succeeding occurrence, a new mark of your friendship towards me. Time will evince, that it makes the impression it ought on my mind.

The effect, which the course of the late military appointments has produced on General Knox, though not very unexpected, is very painful to me. I have a respectful sense of his pretensions as an officer, and I have a warm personal regard for him. My embarrassment is not inconsiderable between these sentiments, and what I owe to a reasonable conduct on my own part, both in respect to myself and to the public. It is a fact, that a number of the most influential men in our affairs would think that, in waving the preference given to me, I acted a weak part in a personal view, and an unwarrantable one in a public view. And General Knox is much mistaken, if he does not believe that this sentiment

would emphatically prevail in that region, to which he supposes his character most interesting; I mean New England.

Yet, my dear Sir, I can never consent to see you seriously compromitted or embarrassed. I shall cheerfully place myself in your disposal, and facilitate any arrangement you may think for the general good. It does not however seem necessary to precipitate any thing. It may be well to see first what part General Pinckney will act when he arrives.

The Secretary of War has sent me a copy of General Knox's letter to him on the subject of his appointment. It does not absolutely decline, but implies the intention to do it, unless a rule of the late army, giving, in cases of promotions on the same day, priority according to former relative rank, is understood to govern. I have advised a reply, of which a copy is enclosed.

The commissions have issued, so that no alteration can be now made as between Generals Knox and Pinckney, if there were not the serious difficulties in the way, which you seem to have anticipated.

The Secretary of War has proposed to the President a change of the plan announced in the first instance, which may bring into immediate activity the inspector-general and General Knox. In this case you may depend on the best efforts in my power, with a peculiar attention to the objects you mention, and you shall be carefully and fully advised of whatever it interests you to know.

With the most respectful and affectionate attachment, I have the honor to remain, my dear General, your very obedient servant,

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

HENRY KNOX TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Boston, 26 August, 1798.

MY DEAR SIR,

In your welcome and much esteemed favor of the 9th, I recognise fully all the substantial friendship and kindness, which I have always so invariably experienced from you.

My letter of the 29th ultimo was written under a pressure of various ideas, all sharpened by a strong sense of the comparison, which had been publicly made between others and myself, and in consequence the inferior station which appeared to have been intended to be assigned to me.

Since my former letter, I think I have ascertained, satisfactorily to myself, the manner or origin of the estimation of the transcendent military talents of General Hamilton. The opinions

formed on that head may be entirely accurate. It may be highly fortunate for our country, that such an estimate had been formed. I hope in God it will be so; for I love my country and shall ever rejoice in its prosperity.

I have ever been upon friendly terms with General Hamilton, and I have always really flattered myself with his esteem and affection.

The single point of regret, which I at present feel, is, that, as it has been intended by some that Hamilton and Pinckney should have the precedence of me, it was not so declared at the time of the nomination, in the manner that the major and brigadier generals were designated in 1775; to wit, first, second, &c. This would have precluded all discussion, and a simple negative on my part would have disencumbered the service of any claims of mine.

But the Secretary of War, in notifying to me the appointment, says, "It may be proper to mention, that the nominations to the Senate, for the general officers of the established and provisional army, were presented on the same day, and in the order in which they appear in the annexed list; and that, in registering them in this department, the same order will be observed."

I do not perceive that this decides in the least degree the point of precedence. It will require some other act of the executive. The rules would decide in favor of former rank. And, indeed, if a special interference should take effect in the present case, if a power exists for that purpose, so as to render dormant the laws on this subject, yet they must be again immediately revived for the adjustment of the relative situations of all the officers about to be called into service.

It would appear, further, that the laws permit only four major-generals; and General Hamilton is not one of the four.

Whether it be proper, that the incidental rank attached to the inspectorship shall be superior to the rank actually possessed with the command, is to be determined by authority.

It is certainly far from my intention to embarrass, or to force myself unbidden into a station designed for another. It is neither my nature nor practice to excite dissension. I shall therefore submit to any proper authority. But, if an invasion shall take place, I shall deeply regret all circumstances, which would insuperably bar my having an active command in the field. But, if such a measure should be my destiny, I shall fervently petition to serve as one of your aids-de-camp, which, with permission, I shall do with all the cordial devotion and attachment, of which my soul is capable.

I am, my dear Sir, with entire attachment and respe
obedient servant,

HENRY K

TIMOTHY PICKERING TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Trenton, 1 Septembe

SIR,

—— If *such former rank* is to be the criterion of the
now proper and necessary to be conferred, what number
officers must precede Colonel Hamilton! And how ma
command Generals Pinckney and Lee! The simple fact
the army contemplated is a new army, that the officers ap
and to be appointed for it were and are simple *citizen*
consequently that the power, which constitutionally selec
from the whole mass of citizens, may rightfully choose c
leave another, and give to persons chosen such stations
respective qualifications shall indicate as most beneficial
country. Can there be any question of the right of the e
wholly to omit General Knox, or any other officer of the
army? Yes, if General Knox's present pretensions are wel
ed. And accordingly the President has expressed his
that General Knox has a "legal right" to precede Colon
ilton; and General Knox appeals to a principle adopted
former army, that, where officers were named the same d
new grade, he who should be last in the list of nominati
his *prior* rank were elder than that of the others, would of
command them all in the new grade. And doubtless it
principle, urged to the President by General Knox, that ha
forth the opinion of his "legal right," as above mentioned

But the principle does not apply to a new army at its
formation. For fifteen years there has been a *discontinua*
officers and services; and, if the principle contended for b
eral Knox were valid, then, carrying it a little further, n
all officers of the revolutionary war, who shall be again call
service, must take their former relative ranks, but they mu
a right to require the executive to call them into servic
to assign them those former relative ranks. For General
claim rests on the idea of *continued* station in a certain
and of *degradation* if a *once* junior officer supersedes him
if this idea of a *continuance* of grade is admitted, then, as
fore remarked, all other old officers may insist on not
dropped or *discontinued* without their own consent; that is
may require being called forth again in their former relative

The President can have taken but an imperfect view of the question. He has said, "Let the order be Knox, Pinckney, Hamilton;" but by the rule to which General Knox appeals, seeing General Hand was named and appointed on the same day, and in the former war had the rank of brigadier-general, he consequently must precede Pinckney, who was only a colonel, and Hamilton and Lee, who were only lieutenant-colonels.

The plain result is, that, in forming the new army, we must resort to simple and original principles. All the gentlemen in question, prior to the late nomination, were *mere citizens, equal* in their rights, and to be *distinguished* only by their *talents* and *virtues;* and talents and virtues are the only legitimate criterions by which to determine the new stations in which they can most advantageously serve their country. Of this the candidates would act becomingly if they left others to judge. The President, who has the right to *decide*, as well as to judge, has pronounced his opinion in favor of General Knox; but fortunately this opinion is not to be *decisive*; it is submitted to *your* opinion; and, without *your consent*, the President did not propose to change (however earnestly he wished it) the order in which you placed the names of Hamilton, Pinckney, and Knox, and in which they were nominated and approved by the Senate.

The President has expressed his opinion, that the "five New England States" would be more than disgusted were Hamilton to precede Knox; but the President is certainly mistaken. I am fully persuaded, that in all New England there is not a man of information, who would hesitate to give the precedency to Hamilton. Of all the senators and representatives in Congress from New England, whose opinions I have heard, not one ever entertained the idea, that Colonel Hamilton should be second to any but you. So far from it, that, if the New England senators had anticipated the present embarrassment, I perfectly believe they would have passed upon Colonel Hamilton's nomination, and adjourned till the next day, before they decided on the others.

I have the honor to be, most respectfully,

Sir, your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

No. XIII. pp. 303, 304, 318.

ON THE RELATIVE RANK OF THE MAJOR-GENE IN THE PROVISIONAL ARMY.

THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Trenton, 19 September,

My dear General,

—— As the Congress had adjourned before my return,* t Senate were detained by the President to receive his nomin in consequence of my mission, it was his intention to have them the day on which I arrived. He accordingly wrote t sage, in which he inserted the names of Generals Hamilton, ney, and Knox, in the order in which they were arranged b and also General Dayton for adjutant-general, and Colonel for one of the three brigadiers. Previously to his thus t their names down, he observed, that in his opinion Colonel ilton (former rank considered) was not entitled to stand so and that he did not know what were the merits, which gav eral Pinckney preference to Knox. I mentioned to him you ions, and, to prevent any misunderstanding of what you d or the motives by which you had been actuated to the arrang you had proposed, I thought it advisable and proper to com cate to him, immediately, the private letter you had writ Colonel Hamilton on the subject,† and given to me open permission to take a copy of it. It appeared to me at the that it settled the arrangement, as he made no further observa and was only prevented from sending in the nominations, ranged in his message and your list, by Mr. Pickering's c in, and informing him that the Senate had adjourned till day.

I waited upon the President the day following, and found something or other, of which I was ignorant, had caused a great change in his mind. He now said he could not thin placing Hamilton before Knox, and that Knox for various re (among others his former rank in the army) was clearly en

* Return from Mount Vernon, when he went there to give noti General Washington of his appointment to the command of the Provi Army.

† Dated July 14th. See p. 263.

to rank next to General Washington. He finally agreed to follow your arrangement, upon my admitting that any of the parties, if dissatisfied with the order of arrangement, might have their claim discussed and settled by a board of officers or the commander-in-chief. ——

A few days after these transactions the President suddenly left Philadelphia for Quincy, without apprizing either Mr. Pickering or me of the day of his intended departure. Mr. Wolcott was absent in Connecticut. ——

With respect to his considering General Knox entitled to priority of rank to Generals Hamilton and Pinckney, this has operated very powerfully as an obstructer to all the army arrangements.

Upon contemplating the details for organizing the twelve regiments of infantry, I found I could not execute them with a despatch proportioned to the emergency and the public expectation while the President remained at Quincy, unless I adopted a course arising out of that situation. It appeared to me, that, if I were first to concentre information in this department from all quarters of the United States, then to digest an arrangement, to communicate it to the President for his determination, to receive back that determination, and then to transmit the result to the parties a great and incalculable portion of time must be consumed.

I therefore submitted, in a letter to the President under date of the 4th of August ultimo, what may be resolved into the following propositions.

1. That the arrangement for the four eastern States and Vermont should be made out under his immediate direction, commanding the aid, if necessary, of Major-General Knox and Brigadier-General Brooks, who reside within those States.

2. That the arrangement for New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and Maryland, should be prepared by myself, with the aid of the general officers within those States, for his final determination.

3. That the arrangement for the southern States (including the cavalry) should be made by General Washington, with the like aid of the general officers in that quarter, subject in like manner to his determination.

4. That four of the twelve regiments should be raised within the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and Vermont; four within the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland; and four within the States of Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Georgia.

5. That, to facilitate the arrangement, I enclosed him of all the officers of the late army in the lines of the five first mentioned, and also of all the applications for milit pointments by persons within those States, which had c this office.

6. That I submitted, as the result of conferences wi commander-in-chief and inspector-general, united with my p knowledge of some of the characters, the following gentle the late army as worthy of consideration for the command ments, namely, Lemuel Trescott, David Cobb, and Willian of Massachusetts; Jeremiah Olney, Henry Sherburne, and Peck, of Rhode Island; Henry Dearborn and Nicholas C of New Hampshire; also Colonel Tallmadge for adjutant-g in the event of the non-acceptance of Colonel North; and Wadsworth, of Litchfield, for major.

7. That he should permit me to call to my aid the ins general, and likewise General Knox, and to charge them w management of particular branches of the service.

8. That General Washington should be permitted to ap secretary.

The President acknowledges the receipt of this letter 4th of August, on the 14th of the same month. He si that its contents are of much importance; desires that C Washington may consider himself in the public service, an authorized to appoint aids and secretaries; thinks that callir other officers into service at present will be attended wi ficulty, unless their rank were first settled; that in his c General Knox is legally entitled to rank next to General ington, and that no other arrangement will give satisfaction if General Washington is of this opinion and will consent I may call Generals Knox and Hamilton into service; an I might depend upon it, the five New England States w patiently submit to the humiliation that has been meditat them.

To this I immediately answered on the 22d of August; " after what has passed with, and the conceptions of, G Washington respecting the relative grades of Generals I ton, Pinckney, and Knox, the order observed by the Pre in presenting their names to the Senate, and by the Senate vising to their appointments, I could not help apprehending disagreeable consequences to the public service, should ferent relative grade be known to be *decisively* contem

That, in submitting this suggestion to his judgment, it was indispensable I should observe, that as well the choice of those gentlemen, as their relative military rank, proceeded originally and exclusively from General Washington, and that I had had no agency direct or indirect, before or while at Mount Vernon, in deciding his mind, either as to the choice or the arrangement of the rank of those he had selected. That I had informed him, that General Washington made the right to name the general officers and general staff a condition of his acceptance, and I had presented accordingly the General's list to him on my return. That, when the general communicated his choice to me, I was aware it might be objected to; but, having had difficulties to encounter, and certain impressions to remove, resulting from his not being consulted previously to his nomination, I did not think it prudent to lose the ground he had conceded, or indeed that I should gain any thing by any effort of mine to persuade him out of his opinions. That I only therefore mentioned to him what I afterwards found incorporated in his letter to Colonel Hamilton, namely, that I concurred in his selection of officers; but whatever respected the persons named by him, and their relative rank, must finally rest with the President. That the circumstances detailed seemed to require, that I should submit to his serious deliberation, whether it was proper or expedient to attempt an alteration in the rank of the gentlemen in question, and, if so, whether it would not be better to transfer the decision to others, than undertake to determine it himself."

The President, on the 29th of August, replied; "That my proposition for settling the relative rank of the gentlemen in question was not approved of. That his opinion was, and always had been, that, as the case now stands, the order of the nomination or of recording has no weight or effect; but that officers appointed on the same day, in whatever order, have a right to rank according to antecedent services. That he made the nomination according to the list presented to him by me, from General Washington, in hopes that rank might be settled among them by agreement or acquiescence, believing at the same time and expressing to you that belief, that the nomination and appointment would give Hamilton no command at all, nor any rank before any major-general. That this was still his opinion. That he was willing to settle all decisively at present, by dating the commissions Knox, on the first day, Pinckney on the second, and Hamilton on the third.

"You speak to me," he adds, "of the expediency of attempt-

ing an alteration of the rank of the gentlemen in questi know, Sir, that no rank has ever been settled by me. my opinion has always been, as it is now, that the orde names in the nomination and record was of no consequ

"General Washington has through the whole conduc honor and consistency. I said and I say now, if I could him the office of President, I would do it immediately, the highest pleasure; but I never said I would hold the c be responsible for its exercise, while he should execute has always said in all his letters, that these points must u depend upon the President.

"The power and authority are in the President. I an to exert this authority at this moment, and to be respon the exercise of it. All difficulties will in this way be But, if it is to be referred to General Washington, or tc and amicable accommodation among the gentlemen them foresee it will come to me at last, after much alterca exasperation of passions, and I shall then determine it e: I should now, Knox, Pinckney, and Hamilton.

"There has been too much intrigue in this business, b General Washington and me. If I shall ultimately be t of it, I am much mistaken in myself."

To this letter (a part of which, being personal and un not a little wounded my feelings) I replied on the same ceived it, namely, the 6th of September instant.

"I had the honor to receive by this morning's mail ter, dated Quincy, August 29th ultimo.

"In making out the commissions for Generals Knox, Pi and Hamilton, I shall follow the order you prescribe, a General Knox's on the first day, General Pinckney's on t ond, and General Hamilton's on the third.

"You observe to me, 'There has been too much intri this business, both with General Washington and me. If ultimately be the dupe of it, I am much mistaken in mys

"Will you excuse the liberty I take in expressing how feel affected at this observation, lest you should attach i mind any portion of the intrigues, if any have been emplo me. It will, Sir, be a relief to me to be ascertained c opinion in this particular; because I flatter myself I can c you, that, abhorring indirect practices, I never even conter any; or, should you not be convinced, I can immediately from a situation, which demands a perfect and mutual con between the President and the person filling it."

I received yesterday the following answer to this letter, dated Quincy the 13th instant.

"I have received your favor of the 6th, and approve your determination to make out the commissions in the order of Knox on the first day, Pinckney on the second, and Hamilton on the third. This being done you may call Generals Knox and Hamilton into service as soon as you please.

"Your request to be informed, whether I attach any portion of the intrigues which I alluded to, if any have been employed, to you, is reasonable; and I have no scruple to acknowledge, that your conduct through the whole towards me has been candid. I have suspected, however, that extraordinary pains were taken with you, to impress upon your mind that the public opinion, and the unanimous wish of the Federalists, were, that General Hamilton might be first, and even commander-in-chief; that you might express this opinion to General Washington more forcibly than I should have done; and that this determined him to make the arrangement as he did. If this suspicion was well founded, I doubt not you made the representation with integrity. I am not, and never was, of the opinion, that the public opinion demanded General Hamilton for the first, and I am now clear that it never expected or demanded any such thing.

"The question being now settled, the responsibility for which I take upon myself, I have no hard thoughts concerning your conduct in this business, and hope you will make your mind easy concerning it."

Conceiving the whole of this business of a very serious nature, and intimately connected with the public interest, I communicated the letters from the President to me, as they were received, to Mr. Wolcott, Mr. Pickering, and Mr. Stoddert, as also my answers to him. The services of General Hamilton being considered too important and consequential to be easily parted with, it was proposed that they should join in a respectful representation to the President. After, however, a good deal of deliberation, the idea of a joint address was relinquished for a representation from Mr. Wolcott alone, who did not appear to be implicated in his suspicions of intrigue. This has been accordingly drawn up and forwarded. It contains the grounds upon which you were induced to expect your arrangement would be adopted, and reasons resulting from the relative talents of the generals and public opinion. ——

With the most ardent and affectionate regard,

I am, my dear General, ever yours,

JAMES MCHENRY

No. XIV. p. 314.

LETTER FROM PRESIDENT ADAMS TO GEORGE WASHIN(

Quincy, 9 October,

SIR,

I received yesterday the letter you did me the honor to on the 25th of September.

You request to be informed, whether my determination verse the order of the three major-generals is final; and w I mean to appoint another adjutant-general without your c rence. I presume, that before this day you have received nation from the Secretary of War, that I some time ago the three commissions and dated them on the same day, in similar to yours, that an amicable adjustment or acquiescence take place among the gentlemen themselves. But, if these shall be disappointed, and controversies should arise, the of course be submitted to you as commander-in-chief; and i all, any one should be so obstinate as to appeal to me fro judgment of the commander-in-chief, I was determined to c that judgment. Because, whatever construction may be put the resolutions of the ancient Congress, which have been s to this case, and whether they are at all applicable to it c there is no doubt to be made, that, by the present consti of the United States, the President has the authority to det the rank of officers.

I have been for some time prepared in my own mind to nate Mr. Dayton to be adjutant-general, in case of the refu Mr. North. Several others have occurred, and been sugges me, but none who, in point of science or literature, politica military merit, or energy of character, appears to be equal t I have no exclusive attachment to him or any other. I have any other in contemplation, I pray you to mention h the Secretary of War, who may fill up his commission immedi in case Mr. North declines.

I hope your own health and that Mrs. Washington's are pe Mine is very indifferent, and Mrs. Adams's extremely low. fined to the bed of sickness for two months, her destiny is very precarious, and mine in consequence of it.

With great respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your obedient and most humble servant,

JOHN ADA

No. XV. p. 324.

SKETCH OF THE QUOTAS OF TROOPS TO BE FURNISHED FOR THE PROVISIONAL ARMY IN THE SOUTHERN STATES.

Mount Vernon, 15 October, 1798.

By the act "To augment the army of the United States, and for other purposes," twelve regiments of infantry, and six troops of light dragoons, are to be added to the present force. By the establishment of them, the first will consist of seven thousand six hundred and eighty rank and file, and the second of three hundred and fifty-four. If four regiments of the former, and all the latter, are to be raised in the States south of the Potomac, the quota of each State, agreeably to the population, to the present representation, and to a medium between the two, will be as follows.

States.	Population.			Representation.			Medium.		
	Infantry	Cavalry	Total.	Infantry	Cavalry	Total.	Infantry	Cavalry	Total.
Virginia	1296	180	1476	1216	167	1383	1256	174	1430
North Carolina	500	69	569	640	88	728	570	79	649
South Carolina	432	60	492	384	55	439	408	57	465
Georgia	143	20	163	128	17	145	135	18	153
Kentucky	127	16	143	128	16	144	128	16	144
Tennessee	62	8	70	64	8	72	63	8	71

The remoteness of Kentucky and Tennessee from the seaboard, where it is presumed the theatre of war will be, is opposed to the raising of dragoons in either of those States. And, to avoid broken companies of infantry or troops of dragoons in any other State, the following plan of arrangement of both officers and privates, conformably to the preceding calculation and principle (as nearly as the case will admit), is suggested for consideration.

States.	Infantry.								Dragoons.							
	Lieut.-Colonels Commandant.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Sergeants.	Music.	Rank and File.	Lieut.-Colonels Commandant.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Cornets.	Sergeants.	Music.	Rank and File.
Virginia	2	4	20	20	20	30	40	1280		1	3	6	3	12	3	177
North Carolina	1	2	9	9	9	36	18	576			2	4	2	8	2	118
South Carolina	1	1	6	6	6	24	12	384			1	2	1	4	1	59
Georgia		1	2	2	2	8	4	128								
Kentucky			2	2	2	8	4	128								
Tennessee			1	1	1	4	2	64								
Total	4	8	40	40	40	160	80	2560		1	6	12	6	24	6	354

The appointment of adjutants, quartermasters, paymasters, surgeons and surgeons' mates, sergeant-majors, quartermaster-sergeants, and senior musicians, does not press, and of necessity must be postponed where regiments are composed of troops from different States, until they are about to unite.

The corporals, saddlers, and farriers are included in the above rank and file.

The lieutenant-colonel commandant is not assigned to any State, because it is not known from whence the most eligible character can be obtained. Another major of dragoons is also wanting.

If Major Tallmadge would accept the command of this corps, I know of none who is preferable. A Captain Watts of this State, an officer of celebrity in the revolutionary war, is very highly recommended by General Lee; as is a Captain Armstrong (now of Georgia) by the same; but what the conduct of these gentlemen has been latterly, and what their politics now are, he knows not. Perhaps the oldest captain of dragoons, now in service, or both of them, may be meritorious officers, and entitled to consideration.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

No. XVI. p. 334.

REPLIES OF GENERAL KNOX AND GENERAL PINCKNEY TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR, ON THE SUBJECT OF THEIR APPOINTMENT IN THE PROVISIONAL ARMY.

HENRY KNOX TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

Boston, 23 October, 1798.

SIR,

I have received your letter enclosing a commission, and giving me to understand that Alexander Hamilton is ranked as the first, Charles C. Pinckney the second, and myself as the third major-general, and that this arrangement is considered as definitive.

In so plain a case, it is unnecessary to multiply words. The impossibility of my serving under officers, so much my juniors, must have been known to those, who made the arrangement. The principle, that no officer can consent to his own degradation by serving in an inferior station, is well known and established among military men.

The duty which I owe to myself precludes my placing myself in such a situation. I therefore definitively decline the appointment of third major-general.

In this aspect of the affair, a compliance with your invitation to repair to Trenton or Philadelphia would answer no valuable purpose.

The recommendations and applications I have received from this and the neighbouring States for military commissions shall be transmitted to the war-office before the 10th of November.

I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient servant,

HENRY KNOX.

CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY TO THE SECRETARY OF WAR.

Trenton, 31 October, 1798.

DEAR SIR,

Agreeably to your desire, expressed in your favor of yesterday, I shall endeavour to be with you either at this place or Philadelphia on the 10th of next month. I am sorry that General Knox has declined his appointment. A few hours after the ship, in which I came, had cast anchor in the North River, it was intimated to me, that it had been doubted whether I would accept my appointment, as General Hamilton, who was of inferior rank to me in the last war, was ranked before me in the new arrangement. I declared then, and still declare, it was with the greatest pleasure I saw his name at the head of the list of major-generals, and applauded the discernment which had placed him there. I knew that his talents in war were great, that he had a genius capable of forming an extensive military plan, and a spirit courageous and enterprising, equal to the execution of it. I therefore without any hesitation immediately sent him word by Major Rutledge, that I rejoiced at his appointment, and would with pleasure serve under him.

It was not until about ten days ago, that I was informed by my friend Major Haskell, that General Knox was dissatisfied that General Hamilton and myself were placed before him. As I considered General Knox to be a very valuable officer, though I do not estimate his talents in a degree equal to those of General Hamilton, I told the Major, that, rather than the feelings of General Knox should be hurt at my being ranked before him, he might take my place in the arrangement, and I desired him, when he wrote to the General, to intimate this to him. General Knox's *absolute refusal* to serve, because I am placed before him,

would make the same offer from me now improper. I therefore renew it. But, if the authority, which appointe the rank of second major-general in the army, will re arrangement and place General Knox before me, I wil quit the service nor be dissatisfied.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect and reg most obedient humble servant,

CHARLES COTESWORTH PINC

No. XVII. pp. 344, 346.

QUESTIONS PROPOSED BY THE SECRETARY OF WAR COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE PROVISIONAL AR

War Department, 10 November

SIR,

It appears by a letter from the President, dated Quin tober 22d, 1798, that it will not be in his power to be i delphia till near the time fixed upon for the meeting of C In order, however, to prevent any injury to the public ser it respects officering the troops directed to be raised by acts of Congress, he has written to me as follows. "If y the generals judge it necessary to appoint the officers of ba before we can have opportunity to nominate them to the you may fill up the commissions with the blanks you have, you have not enough, send new ones by post."

I have thought it proper, in pursuance of this autho submit to you a list of all those persons, who have been mended for commissions in the army, with their letters of sions, and also a list of all the officers of the revolutionary and to request that you will, with the aid of Generals Ha and Pinckney, prepare from these, and any other sources of mation, a list of the most deserving and suitable charact your estimation, to fill the different grades to which the au cited applies.

I have also, in conformity with my letter to you, dated th of August ultimo, to request, that you would submit to Ge

---

* This paper was handed to the Commander-in-chief, when he a major-generals met in Philadelphia to prepare a plan for the arran of the army.

Hamilton and Pinckney (General Knox having declined his appointment) the following questions, and that you would be pleased to take the same into mature consideration, and report to me the result of your deliberations.

1. Will it be expedient and proper to select the officers and raise the men for the twelve regiments of infantry and six companies of cavalry from the following districts, and in the following proportions, or as nearly so as circumstances will admit? *First;* the officers and men for four regiments of infantry from within the States of New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Vermont. *Secondly;* the officers and men for four regiments of infantry from within the States of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. *Thirdly;* the officers and men for four regiments of infantry from within the States of Virginia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, South Carolina, and Georgia. *Fourthly;* the whole or a principal part of the officers and men of the six companies of cavalry from within the district where it is most likely they will have to serve.

2. If these questions are determined in the affirmative, then whether, in making the selection of officers, the least exceptionable rule for determining the numbers to be taken from each State within the respective divisions aforesaid will not be by their relative number of inhabitants according to the census, whenever the application of this rule will not introduce the least worthy to the exclusion of more meritorious characters.

According to this rule, the following table will exhibit pretty nearly the proportion of officers and men to be drawn from the respective States for the twelve regiments of infantry.

States.	Infantry.	Lt.-Cols.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieuts.	Ensigns.
New Hampshire	396	1	1	4	4	4
Massachusetts	1326	2	4	20	20	20
Rhode Island	192			3	3	3
Connecticut	663	1	2	10	10	10
Vermont	239		1	3	3	3
New York	719	1	2	10	10	10
New Jersey	380	1	1	6	6	6
Pennsylvania	917	1	2	13	13	13
Delaware	126		1	1	1	1
Maryland	676	1	2	10	10	10
Virginia	1400	2	4	20	20	20
North Carolina	630	1	2	9	9	9
South Carolina	420	1	1	6	6	6
Georgia	140		1	2	2	2
Kentucky	140			2	2	2
Tennessee	86			1	1	4

3. Whether, in the present state of things, it is expedi proper to proceed *immediately* to the appointment of the or to suspend their appointment until the meeting of Con

4. Whether, in the present state of our foreign relatio expedient and proper to proceed, immediately after the appoi of the officers, to recruit the whole of the twelve regime infantry, and six companies of cavalry. If inexpedient to the whole, then what part thereof will it be proper to recr in which district or districts of the Union?

5. Whether, if determined that a part only ought to be with recruited, it will be expedient, notwithstanding, to the whole of the officers; and whether it ought to be signi them, that they are not to be entitled to pay, &c. previ being called into actual service.

6. Will it be expedient and proper to withdraw any troops stationed upon the northwestern and southern fro namely, on the Lakes, between the Lakes and the Rivers Oh Mississippi, and on the Tennessee and Georgia frontier bo on the Indians and the River St. Mary's, with a view to rei the troops on the seaboard frontier?

7. The stations of the beforementioned troops and their bers will be seen by the annexed return and letters from Bri General Wilkinson. If inexpedient that any of these sho withdrawn, will it be proper to reinforce them with the tw panies, directed by a late act of Congress to be added to of the old regiments of infantry?

8. What distribution under the present aspect of affairs to be made of the troops and recruits *now* on our seaboard tier, the description, places of rendezvous, stations, and nu of which are exhibited in the annexed return?

9. What number of the *troops to be raised* ought to b tioned in the respective divisions aforesaid, and in what pl

10. Will it be best for the service and discipline, that th cruits should be supplied by contracts at the enlisting rendez as now practised; or to allow to each recruit a fixed sum *diem* in lieu of his ration, previous to his joining the ge rendezvous, or encampment within his division?

11. Ought the army when in the field to be supplied wit tions by means of purchasing and issuing commissaries, o contract as at present?

12. What quantity and kinds of cannon, field-artillery, mil stores, and other articles necessary to an operating army, suc

may be raised, will it be proper to procure, in addition to what is exhibited as on hand, agreeably to the annexed return by the superintendent of military stores, and that may be expected to be procured in consequence of the annexed letter from the Secretary of the Treasury?

13. Our greatest deposits of artillery and military stores are at Springfield in Massachusetts, and Philadelphia in Pennsylvania. We are besides forming magazines near Harper's Ferry on the Potomac in Virginia, and at Fayetteville in North Carolina. Ought there to be any other places established for principal magazines than these four, and the subordinate deposits mentioned in the aforesaid return?

As it will be proper, in the course of your deliberations, to ascertain from the Secretary of the Treasury whether he can furnish the moneys necessary for the military service, I enclose an estimate made out some time since, showing the money which I thought would be required, and the periods at which it might be wanted, for the maintenance of the old and new army; and to provide certain military articles, for which appropriations have been made by late acts of Congress, and for clothing for the provisional army.

It may also be proper, that you should confer with the Secretary of State on the subject of our foreign relations, as well as the Secretary of the Treasury on the extent and reliance, which may be placed on our resources and finances, to assist you to mature your opinion upon some of the points submitted. I need not add, that the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury will cheerfully give you every information, which you may think it necessary to request.

With the greatest respect, I have the honor to be, Sir, your most obedient and most humble servant,

JAMES MCHENRY.

No. XVIII. pp. 391, 438.

POLITICAL OPINIONS OF PATRICK HENRY

ARCHIBALD BLAIR TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Richmond, 19 June,

SIR,

The original letter from my departed friend, Patrick He which the enclosed is the only copy ever suffered to be was intended merely to counteract some malicious reports lating in this district, that Mr. Henry was unfriendly to th tion of Mr. Marshall, as a representative to the next Co But, as it contains sentiments, which contradict the base i tions, that he was an enemy to the opposition measures government towards the French, and unfriendly to you, I fe ious for his letter to be lodged in some place, that here may stand a chance to be brought forth as a proof agains a calumny; and with this view I transmit to you a copy, in that it will find a place in a corner of your cabinet. I have sent the original, had it not been much torn by the fr resort to it during the canvassing for the late election. I been often urged to publish it in the newspapers; but, that of communication being at present so polluted, where vi traduced and vice supported, I have thought that posterity w unable hereafter to decide from it whether their ancestors virtuous or vicious.

It is much to be lamented, that a man of Mr. Henry's should be so little personally known in the world. I rem at the commencement of the revolution he was dreaded a Cromwell of America; and since, he has been counted up the opposition party as a rival to you, and the destroyer o happy and most valuable constitution. I had the honor of fying for my present office, when Mr. Henry commenced th ministration of our revolutionary government,* from which p to the day of his death I have been upon the most intimate I believe friendly terms with him; and I can with truth say, I never saw any thing tyrannical in his disposition, or othe ambitious than to be serviceable to mankind.

---

* Patrick Henry was the first governor under the constitution of Vir from 1776 to 1779.

With regard to you, Sir, I may say, as he said of Marshall, that he *loved you;* and for the same reason, *because you felt and acted as a republican, as an American;* for I have no doubt but he alludes to you, when he makes the exception of "one other who was in another line," to whom he would give the preference. During the war an attempt was made by an anonymous letter to enlist Mr. Henry on the side of an infamous faction, opposed to you as commander-in-chief. His letter to you on that subject, and your answer, have been lost, I believe, during Arnold's invasion; which I lament, as his letter was a proof of his confidence in, and attachment to you, and I had a desire to preserve those documents.*

I have now to apologize for obtruding, where I have not the honor of a personal acquaintance; and I flatter myself the motive of rescuing the character of my valuable friend from the imputation of being a Jacobin, and foe to you, will plead the excuse of him, who has the honor to be, with the highest respect, yours, &c.,

A. BLAIR.

PATRICK HENRY TO ARCHIBALD BLAIR.

Red Hill, Charlotte, 8 January, 1799.

DEAR SIR,

Your favor of the 28th of last month I have received. Its contents are a fresh proof, that there is cause for much lamentation over the present state of things in Virginia. It is possible that most of the individuals who compose the contending factions are sincere, and act from honest motives. But it is more than probable, that certain leaders meditate a change in government. To effect this, I see no way so practicable as dissolving the confederacy. And I am free to own, that in my judgment most of the measures, lately pursued by the opposition party, directly and certainly lead to that end. If this is not the system of the party, they have none, and act *ex tempore.*

I do acknowledge, that I am not capable to form a correct judgment on the present politics of the world. The wide extent, to which the present contentions have gone, will scarcely permit any observer to see enough in detail to enable him to form any

* When Arnold invaded Virginia, in 1781, a large part of the public papers were burnt. The letters here alluded to were preserved by General Washington, and are contained in this work, according to the reference in the text.

thing like a tolerable judgment on the final result, as it spect the nations in general. But, as to France, I have r in saying, that to her it will be calamitous. Her cond made it the interest of the great family of mankind to v downfall of her present government; because its existenc compatible with that of all others within its reach. An I see the dangers that threaten ours from her intrigues arms, I am not so much alarmed as at the apprehension destroying the great pillars of all government and of soc I mean virtue, morality, and religion. This is the arm friend, and this alone, that renders us invincible. These tactics we should study. If we lose these, we are cor fallen indeed. In vain may France show and vaunt he matic skill, and brave troops; — so long as our manners an ciples remain sound, there is no danger. But, believing, that these are in danger, that infidelity in its broadest sense the name of philosophy, is fast spreading, and that, under tronage of French manners and principles, every thing tha to be dear to man is covertly but successfully assailed, I value of those men amongst us, who hold out to the wo idea, that our continent is to exhibit an originality of cha and that, instead of that imitation and inferiority, which th tries of the old world have been in the habit of exactin the new, we shall maintain that high ground upon which has placed us, and that Europe will alike cease to rule give us modes of thinking.

But I must stop short, or else this letter will be all p These prefatory remarks, however, I thought proper to ma they point out the kind of character amongst our count most estimable in my eyes. General Marshall and his coll exhibited the American character as respectable. France, period of her most triumphant fortune, beheld them as unap Her threats left them as she found them, mild, temperate, Can it be thought, that with these sentiments I should utte thing tending to prejudice General Marshall's election? Ve from it indeed. Independently of the high gratification I fel his public ministry, he ever stood high in my esteem as a p citizen. His temper and disposition were always pleasan talents and integrity unquestioned. These things are suffici place that gentleman far above any competitor in the distri Congress. But, when you add the particular information a sight which he has gained, and is able to communicate t

public councils, it is really astonishing, that even blindness itself should hesitate in the choice. But it is to be observed, that the efforts of France are to loosen the confidence of the people everywhere in the public functionaries, and to blacken characters most eminently distinguished for virtue, talents, and public confidence; thus smoothing the way to conquest, or those claims of superiority as abhorrent to my mind as conquest, from whatever quarter they may come.

Tell Marshall I love him, because he felt and acted as a republican, as an American. The story of the Scotch merchants and old tories voting for him is too stale, childish, and foolish, and is a French *finesse*; an appeal to prejudice, not to reason and good sense. If they say in the daytime the sun shines, we must say it is the moon; if, again, we ought to eat our victuals, No, say we, unless it is ragout or fricassee; and so on to turn fools, in the same proportion as they grow wise. But enough of such nonsense.

As to the particular words stated by you and said to come from me, I do not recollect saying them. But certain I am, I never said any thing derogatory to General Marshall; but, on the contrary, I really should give him my vote for Congress, preferably to any citizen in the State at this juncture, one only excepted, and that one is in another line.

I am too old and infirm ever again to undertake public concerns. I live much retired, amidst a multiplicity of blessings from that Gracious Ruler of all things, to whom I owe unceasing acknowledgments for his unmerited goodness to me; and, if I was permitted to add to the catalogue one other blessing, it should be, that my countrymen should learn wisdom and virtue, and in this their day to know the things that pertain to their peace.

Farewell. I am, dear Sir, yours,

PATRICK HENRY.

No. XIX. p. 399.

CONSIDERATIONS ON THE POLITICAL RELATIONS BE1 THE UNITED STATES AND FRANCE, IN A LETTER JOEL BARLOW.

JOEL BARLOW TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Paris, 2 October,

SIR,

On hearing of your late nomination as commander-in-cl the American armies, I rejoice at it, not because I belie war which that nomination contemplates is yet inevitable, a it will furnish an occasion for a further display of your n talents, but because it may enable you to exert your influe a greater effect in preventing the war. By becoming mc centre of information than you could be in your retireme will be better able to judge of the disposition of both cou and to offer such counsels to your own government, as ma to remove the obstacles that still oppose themselves to a ciliation.

Were you now President of the United States, I shou address you this letter, because, not knowing my inclinati the tranquillity of a retired life, you might think that seeking a place, or had some further object in view, than th ple one of promoting peace between the two republics. hope, under present circumstances, you will believe my mot be pure and unmixed, and that the object of my letter is o call your attention to the true state of facts.

Perhaps few men, who cannot pretend to be in the secre either government, are in a better situation than myself to of the motives of both, to assign the true causes, and trac the progress of their unhappy misunderstanding; or to appr their present dispositions, pretensions, and wishes. I am c that there is none who labors more sincerely for the restoi of harmony, upon terms honorable to the United States anc vantageous to the cause of liberty.

I will not in this place go over the history of past transac It would be of little use. The object is to seize the malac its present state, and try to arrest its progress. The dispu this moment may be characterized, simply and literally, a *m derstanding*. I cannot persuade myself to give it a harsher n

as it applies to either government. It is clear, that neither of them has an interest in going to war with the other, and I am fully convinced, that neither has the inclination; that is, I believe the balance of inclination as well as interest, on both sides, is in favor of peace. But each government, though sensible of this truth with respect to itself, is ignorant of it with respect to the other. Each believes the other determined on war, and ascribes all its conduct to a deep-rooted hostility. The least they can do, therefore, under this impression, is to prepare for an event, which they both believe inevitable, while they both wish to avoid it.

But by what fatality is it, that a calamity so dreadful must be *rendered* inevitable, because it is *thought* so? Both governments have tongues, and both have ears. Why will they not speak? Why will they not listen? The causes, that have hitherto prevented them, are not difficult to assign. I could easily explain them, as I believe, to the satisfaction of all parties, and without throwing so much blame on either government, as each of them at present ascribes to the other. But I will avoid speaking of any past provocations on either side. The point that I wish to establish in your mind is, that the French Directory is at present sincerely desirous of restoring harmony between this country and the United States, on terms honorable and advantageous to both parties. I wish to convince you of this, and, through you, the American government; because that government, being desirous of the same thing, would not fail to take such steps as would lead immediately to the object.

In offering you my proofs of the present disposition on this side, you will permit me to observe, that some of them are, from their nature, incapable of being detailed, and others improper to be trusted to the casualties of a letter. But I will mention a few, that are ostensible, and, so far as they go, undeniable. First, the Directory has declared, that it will receive and treat with any minister from America, who shall appear to be sent with a real intention of treating and terminating existing difficulties. I have no doubt but this was the intention when the last envoys were sent; but, from some unfortunate circumstances, the Directory did not believe it. Secondly, as a preliminary, it has declared that in the negotiation there shall be no question of a loan of money, or apologies for offensive speeches pronounced by the executive on either side. Thirdly, all commissions given to privateers in the West Indies are recalled; and, when new commissions are given, the owners and commanders are to be restricted, under bonds, to

the legal objects of capture. Fourthly, an embargo, that on the American ships within the Republic, in consequer report that a war was begun on the part of the United was taken off as soon as it was ascertained that such not been begun; and a new declaration was at the same ti to America of the wishes of France to treat.

These facts will doubtless come to your knowledge throu channels before you receive this letter. But there are oth which in my mind are equally clear, though to you they destitute of corroborating circumstances, and must rest u own information and opinion.

1. That this government contemplates a just indemnity liations on American commerce, to be ascertained by sioners in a manner similar to the one prescribed in ou with England.

2. That the legislation will soon be changed here, with to neutrals; and that all flags will be put on the footing law of nations.

3. That a public agent would have been sent to Phila soon after Mr. Gerry's departure, were it not for appreh that he would not be received. There was a doubt whetl American government would not already have taken such ures of hostility as to be unwilling to listen to terms of modation; and the Directory did not like to risk the cha seeing its offers refused.

4. That the Directory considers these declarations and t tions as a sufficient overture on its part; that it has retre an open ground which is quite unsuspicious; that a refusal part of the American government to meet on this ground followed by immediate war; and that it will be a war of th terrible and vindictive kind.

This, Sir, is my view of the present state of facts. Sh make that impression on your mind, which I desire for th of humanity that it may, you will judge whether it does no port with the independence of the United States and the of their government to send another minister to form new t with the French Republic. In a war there is clearly noth be *gained* by us, not even honor. Honor, indeed, may be by war, and so it may by negotiation. But the calamities i rable from a war of this kind, and under present circumst would be incalculable. I do not say that the United Stat any portion of them, would be conquered. But they woul

rifice great numbers of their best citizens, burthen themselves with four times their present debt, overturn the purest system of morals, and lose the fairest opportunity that ever a nation had of rising to greatness and happiness on the basis of liberty.

Were I writing to a young general, whose name was still to be created, I might deem it useless to ask him to stifle in its birth a war on which he had founded his hopes of future honors. But you, Sir, having already earned and acquired all that can render a man great and happy, can surely have no object of ambition but to render your country so. To engage your influence in favor of a new attempt at negotiation before you draw your sword, I thought it only necessary to convince you, that such an attempt would be well received here, and probably attended with success. I can do no more than assure you, that this is my sincere opinion, and that my information is drawn from unsuspected sources.

I am not accustomed to interpose my advice in the administration of any country, and should not have done it now, did I not believe it my duty as a citizen of my own, and a friend to all others. I see two great nations rushing on each other's bayonets, without any cause of contention but a misunderstanding. I shudder at the prospect, and wish to throw myself between the vans, and suspend the onset till a word of explanation can pass

I hope my letter will have cast some light upon the subject; but, if it shall not, I know you will excuse the attempt, for you know my zeal is honest.

I have the honor to be, Sir, with great respect,

JOEL BARLOW.

No. XX. p. 418.

INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE SECRETARY OF WAR TO THE INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF THE PROVISIONAL ARMY.

JAMES MCHENRY TO ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

War Department, 4 February, 1799.

SIR,

Lieutenant-General Washington having declined, agreeably to the condition upon which he accepted of his appointment, any

command whatever of the army of the United States, un
time as his presence in the field shall be required for actu
ations, or his services demanded by peculiar and urgent
stances; it is therefore proper to make such arrangeme
specting the distribution of the existing military authority,
most conduce to the good of the service, and is best ad
our present situation, and to the objects to which our for
eventually be applied.

Before entering into particulars upon the principal sub
present contemplated, it will be useful to enumerate the
of the troops of the United States, and the course taken
municate with them.

1. There are, on the Lakes, namely, on Lake Ontar
garrisons of Oswego and Niagara; on Lake Erie and La
Clair, the garrisons of Presque Isle and Detroit; on Lake
at the entrance of the Strait leading to Lake Michigan, the
son of Michilimackinac; on the Miami River, Fort Way
the Ohio, Fort Franklin, Fort Washington, and Fort Massac

2. There are, on the Mississippi, garrisons at the Chi
Bluffs, Walnut Hills, and Natchez, or Loftus Heights.

3. There are several posts on the Creek frontier of the
of Georgia.

4. There are several posts on the Indian frontier of th
of Tennessee.

5. There are several garrisons on the seaboard from M
Georgia, inclusive.

The first enumerated posts (except Oswego and Niagara),
General Wilkinson was at certain stations in the Northw
Territory, have communicated through him with the depa
of war. The second, do now communicate through Genera
kinson, who is on the Mississippi. The third, through Lieut
Colonel Butler. The fourth, through Lieutenant-Colonel G
The fifth, through the medium of the commandants of the s
garrisons.

I have said that the first-described garrisons commun
through General Wilkinson while at certain stations. For
ple, when the General was stationary at Pittsburg, or Fort
ington, on the Ohio, the whole of these garrisons above and
him, except Oswego and Niagara, communicated directly wit
General, and the General with the Secretary of War. A
when the General held a position at Detroit, all the gar
between him and the seat of government, though within

sphere of command, communicated directly with the Secretary of War. Lastly; since the General entered into the Mississippi, all the garrisons above him communicated directly with the Secretary of War.

Oswego and Niagara being, in all the aforesaid positions of the General, too distant to enable him to give quick information respecting them, were always allowed to hold direct communications with the department of war.

A slight view of the map of the country, over which troops are stationed, the distance between the garrisons, the routes by which it is practicable for them to communicate with each other and with the seat of government, added to a consideration of the serious inconveniences, that might have resulted during the unsettled state of things, which has existed for some time past generally on the frontiers, rendered an adherence to the rule of making no communications to any of them unless through the commanding General, whatever might have been his position, dilatory beyond measure, and too dangerous for practice during such a period.

It has been deemed equally inconsistent with situation, and dangerous to tranquillity, to make the General, who is now at Loftus Heights, on the Mississippi, the organ by which the department of war should communicate with the garrisons and troops on the seaboard, and the frontiers of Georgia and Tennessee.

The state of things common to an Indian frontier, such as that of Georgia and Tennessee, has rendered it indispensable to the success of the measures of government to obtain the earliest information of every circumstance that might lead to war in those quarters, or to serious embarrassments, if not early counteracted. That a rapid communication might at all times take place, the frontiers of Georgia and Tennessee have been formed into two districts, and the commandant of the military force within each made the organ of communication for his respective district.

Few of the fortifications on the seaboard having been garrisoned before the law passed for raising a second regiment, or corps of artillerists and engineers, the whole of these garrisons have been permitted to correspond directly with the Secretary of War.

You will see in the project of regulations, which I sketched some time since, and which was put into your hands by General Washington, that I contemplated to arrange in separate districts the force and posts on the seaboard, as well as on the western

frontiers, and to combine as many of them, as could be with convenience to the service, under the superintendenc then general-in-chief This part of the regulations had basis the French ordinances relative to the same subject, tended to introduce more order and system into our mil fairs, and abridge, as far as consistent with the general i the epistolary labors of the department. The execution project met with some obstructions, and has been procra by causes, which it is deemed unnecessary to relate.

While the ideas presented to you exhibit the difficult would attend the imposing upon any general officer the correspondence with the army, unless indeed he was to stracted wholly from the troops, and to reside constantly seat of government, they point, nevertheless, to the practi of dividing the army into subordinate commands, and of a certain number of such commands under the control and intendence of district officers.

The President has accordingly directed me to make a arrangement for our military force, as may correspond wi situation, and to assign to the major-generals, who are t mand it, the superintendence of such portions thereof, a best tend to promote military discipline, the general inter the service, and the objects of the military establishment.

You will therefore be pleased, until otherwise instruct consider yourself invested with the entire command of a troops in garrison on the northern Lakes in the Northw Territory, including both banks of the Ohio, and on the l sippi.' You will, as an organ of communication between yc the garrisons on the Lakes in the Northwestern Territory, a casionally those on the Mississippi, direct, if you judge it p Brigadier-General Wilkinson to establish his head-quarters at burg, or such other position as you may deem best calc to facilitate his communications to you, and also with the sons you may place under his superintendence. You will, find it can be arranged to advantage, establish subordinate di within his command, with each a commandant, who shall communicate with General Wilkinson, and receive your through him, relative to the garrisons under their superinten respectively. You will make similar dispositions on the l sippi, for the superintendence of the garrisons within that di

In deciding upon these arrangements, you will be partic careful, that they do not occasion inconvenient delays i

transmission of information to the seat of government, or throw obstructions in the way of immediate succours being given to the most remote garrisons, in cases of urgency; and will direct your corresponding officers in the Northwestern Territory and on the Mississippi to pass all letters, which they address to you, open, and through the Secretary at War, at least so long as your position shall be such as to afford to the Secretary an opportunity to know their contents sooner, than if they were to be received by you in the first instance. By this arrangement, it will be at all times in the power of the Secretary of War to give orders in emergencies, which can afterwards be communicated to you for your future government.

Besides the command of the troops and garrisons in the tract of country before described, you will assume that of all the troops and posts which are, or may be, within the State of Maryland, and all the States to the northward and eastward thereof.

Major-General Pinckney will be instructed to take the command of all the troops and posts that are or may be within the States of Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

It is expected, and you will give orders accordingly, that the garrisons and troops within your command and superintendence make returns and observe the enclosed regulations.

The recruiting service is an object of primary importance; it is conceived to be particularly connected with the duties of the inspector-general; the sole direction of it is therefore, with a view to order and efficiency, confided to you alone.

It is to be lamented that circumstances have prevented the obtaining of an early supply of necessary clothing for the troops, directed to be raised by the act passed the 16th of July, 1798, and that the progress made, since it was practicable to enter upon the business, does not justify our immediately commencing the recruiting service. Enclosed is a report by the purveyor of the public supplies, which shows the quantities of the different articles of clothing, which he thinks may be relied on, and the times at which he presumes it will be ready for delivery.

Although, however, the impracticability of obtaining a proper supply of clothing may impose the necessity of some delay in the actual commencement of the recruiting service, nevertheless certain preparatory arrangements, it is thought, may greatly facilitate the same. You are invited, therefore, to lose no time in dividing, at least, the States from which officers have lately been appointed,

into as many districts as there are companies to be r them, and forwarding to the officers to be employed res in each district, through the commandant, their recruiting tions, with orders, either to hold themselves prepared to ent the service the moment they receive your ulterior directio engage provisionally as many recruits as are willing t themselves on their lists, and who may be promised pay fi day of their being enrolled and sworn, with their bount the officer receiving his final instructions, or (which per safer) upon their arrival at the general rendezvous.

The instructions advert to the qualifications of recruits eral terms. It may be proper to be more particular than structions are respecting enlistments for the cavalry.

The important services to which the cavalry are destin event of actions sometimes depending solely upon their va impression,) renders it indispensable, that such corps be co of the best materials, and, in proportion to the small num signed to the army and the effects expected to be produ them, that the utmost care be observed in their selection.

Let the regulations, then, upon this point restrict the rec officer to engage none except natives for this corps, and, o such only as, from their known character and fidelity, n trusted to the extent of their powers.

The size of the cavalry recruit deserves a degree of att Warnery observes very justly in his remarks on cavalry, "t every species of cavalry, *the man ought to be proportioned size of his horse*, and the arms with which he is to serve a and proportioned to them both, and to the nature of the s to be performed; consequently the cuirassier should be larg his arms heavier than the dragoon, and these more so th light horse or hussars. A small man has great difficulty to a large horse, particularly with a cuirass; they should all, ever, be muscular and robust, but not heavy; the Prussia goons are too heavy for their horses; and it is ridiculous t a large man upon a small horse, which, by being strained too much weight, is very soon ruined, and the trooper dismou a man who is more than five feet eight inches ought not received into the cavalry."

It will be proper that Major-General Pinckney should atte the recruiting service in the division of country assigned t command, and that he should receive from you all the nece instructions upon the subject.

You will report monthly to the Secretary of War an abstract of the number of men recruited, the clothing which may be wanted, and the necessary moneys to be remitted for the service.

Enclosed is a schedule of the officers, who have accepted their appointments, with their respective places of residence annexed. Enclosed also is a list of the officers at present employed in the recruiting service, and their places of residence.

Should you think the existing instructions to recruiting officers require revision, or that additional articles are necessary for the extensive field we are entering upon, to give more system to the business, you will report the alterations or additions, that they may be submitted to the President for his decision, incorporating therein those which respect the cavalry.

You will also indicate to me, as soon as possible, the several stations where rations must be provided, that measures may be taken accordingly.

Connected with this subject is another of considerable importance; I mean the permanent disposition of the troops after they shall have been raised.

Having taken the opinion of General Washington on this point, it is thought advisable that it should be adopted, until a change of circumstances shall render a different disposition proper. The General observed, that, though it might now be premature to fix a permanent disposition of the troops, it might, nevertheless, be useful to indicate certain stations, where they may be assembled provisionally, and may probably be suffered to continue while matters remain in the present posture. The stations eligible in this view may be found for two regiments in the vicinity of Providence River, near Uxbridge; for two other regiments in the vicinity of Brunswic in New Jersey; for two other regiments in the vicinity of the Potomac near Harper's Ferry; for two other regiments in the vicinity of Augusta, but above the Falls of the Savannah. This disposition, the General observed, will unite considerations relative to the discipline and health of the troops, and to the economical supply of their wants. It will also have some military aspects; in the first place towards the security of Boston and Newport; in the second, towards that of New York and Philadelphia; in the third and fourth, towards that of Baltimore, Charleston, Savannah, and the southern States generally; and, in the third, particularly towards the reinforcement of the western army in certain events. But, he subjoined, the military motives have only a qualified influence, since it is not doubted, that, in the

prospect of a serious attack upon this country, the dispos
the army ought to look emphatically to the southern reg
that which is by far most likely to be the scene of action

It was also the General's opinion, which is concurred
the companies directed to be added to the regiments of
establishment ought, as soon as is convenient, to reinfo
western army, and that their destination in the first instan
be Pittsburg.

His opinion is also in general to be adopted relative
disposition of the artillery. He proposed to assign a c
battalion to the western army; to the fortifications at Bost
company; to those at New York, two companies; to th
Newport, two companies; to those at West Point, one; t
at Mud Island, two; to those at Baltimore, one; to those
folk, two; to those on Cape Fear River, one; to those at C
ton, two; to those at Savannah, one; to those at the mouth
St. Mary's, one. It is thought there may be some other f
places on the seaboard that will require attention, which
to you to decide upon, after you have taken a deliberate
the subject. He is further of opinion, that the remainin
battalions had better be reserved for the army in the fiel
that, during the winter, they may retain the stations the
occupy; but that, as soon as they can conveniently go into
it will be advisable to assemble them at some central or
central point, there to be put in a course of regular instr
together with successive detachments of the officers and
commissioned officers of the seaboard garrisons, until the
vices shall be actually required.

You will therefore give effect to the aforesaid disposition
so arrange the companies of artillery, that those belonging
same regiment or corps may form contiguous garrisons.

You will also make such an arrangement of the subalter
the captains of artillerists and engineers, as in your opinio
produce the greatest harmony among the officers, and go
the service. Enclosed is a list of the names of all the offic
the army, classed according to their respective regiments or
with the date of their commissions.

A system of regulations being wanted for the government
discipline of the volunteer companies, you will, as soon as
venient, report one for the consideration of the President.

Enclosed is the copy of a letter to Brigadier-General Wilki
dated the 31st of January, 1799, by which you will perceive
he is instructed to wait your orders.

Considering with what view the posts, which our troops occupy on the Lakes, were originally erected, it may be useful to employ a judicious engineer to survey them and the adjacent country on the Lakes, in order that it may be ascertained, in the various relations of trade and defence, whether they are susceptible of any beneficial changes. You will for this purpose select from the corps of artillerists and engineers, at a convenient time, a qualified officer to make the necessary survey, and report the result relative to these objects.

It is required that you report, as soon as it can be done with convenience, a system of regulations for the government of the inspector-general, and the assistant inspectors of every description, expressive of their duties and functions, and comprising the duties of those officers to whom their functions are applicable.

I need not urge it upon you, to exercise the most vigilant superintendence over every branch of the service within the sphere of your command. I cannot avoid, however, calling your particular attention to the discovery of the causes, which may induce irregularity in the police of the armies, in the field, and in our posts or garrisons upon the different frontiers of the United States; and enjoin, that every legal and proper step be instantly resorted to, which the laws or the usages of armies authorize on such occasions, to punish the offenders, and produce a salutary result. It is expected, that you will neglect no means of obliging, at the stated periods, the proper officers to make all returns requisite to exhibit the number and state of the troops in every position; to forward their muster and pay rolls, returns of the quantity of clothing delivered, on hand, or due to the soldiers, of the distribution generally of the public property, of the quantity and situation of every article in store, of the supplies which are or may be wanted, and every other exhibit and return necessary to the information of the Secretary of War, and indispensable to the accounting officers of the war department.

You know precisely how much the regularity and perfection of such returns depend on the disposition of officers to execute their orders; and that a saving to the public, or a judicious and well-regulated economy, is rather more to be expected from the integrity, vigilance, and knowledge of those who are intrusted, or have a control over the army expenditures and property, than from the wisest general regulations or instructions that can possibly be devised. Whenever there is found a deficiency of secure deposites for, or a want of requisite qualities in the officer charged with

the care and management of, the public property, it is e: that you will remedy the evil, if within your lawful pow point to the circumstance, that it may be considered by t thority competent to the remedy.

Finally, I cannot conclude these instructions without exp my most unlimited confidence in your talents to execute th trusts, which the President reposes in you, and my own mo fect reliance upon your coöperation and assistance in ever that concerns the army establishment, and the means to r whatever defects may be found to exist therein; and that at all times recognise, in the execution of the orders whic may receive, the most perfect evidences of your candor and ship. I have the honor to be, &c.

JAMES MCHE

No. XXI. pp. 468, 469.

REMARKS ON THE DIVERSITY OF OPINIONS IN THE NET, RELATIVE TO A MISSION TO FRANCE.

TIMOTHY PICKERING TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Trenton, 24 October, 1

SIR,

When I last wrote to you, I had grounds to expect, c President's arrival, that the mission to France would be susp until the fate of its government should be known. This question I supposed (and my colleagues had formed the expectation) would be a subject of consultation. But we been disappointed. The President alone considered and de Whether he has "considered it in all its relations," he onl tell; but if he has, his conclusions are fatally erroneous, and clearly was his reasoning on the consequences of the missic recited by Judge Ellsworth, after he and Governor Davie had with the President. He did not consult us, because he had deliberated on the subject, had made up his mind, and thi unchangeable. To this effect he spoke to Mr. Stoddert, after receiving a written order to get the frigate ready, call ask him some question.

Mr. Murray (in letters mostly private, which I have laid b

the President,) viewing the state of France within, and its foreign relations from a near station, supposes the Republic will not survive six months; the President supposes it will last seven years, and desires his opinion may be remembered.

The President thinks the French government will not accept the terms, which the envoys are instructed to propose; that they will speedily return; and that he shall have to recommend to Congress a declaration of war. Fallacious expectation! That government will hardly hesitate about the terms; for we ask only what we have a clear right to insist on. And, if we demand any thing unreasonable, the French government, sooner than let the envoys return and hazard immediate war, would yield every thing; with an intention of disregarding its engagements the moment the pressure of the combined powers should cease, or that peace were made with them. *But, as to the French negotiation producing a war with England; if it did, England could not hurt us!* This last idea was part of Mr. Ellsworth's recital to Mr. Wolcott and me. I had not patience to hear more; but have desired Mr. Wolcott to commit the whole recital to writing, which he promised to do. And yet the President has several times, in his letters to me from Quincy, mentioned the vast importance of keeping on good terms with England!

Among the most enlightened citizens and truest friends to our country, but one opinion prevails. All deprecate the French mission, as fraught with irreparable mischiefs. *Once* I would have relied on the good sense of the people for a remedy of the mischiefs when assailing us; but my opinion of that good sense is vastly abated. A large proportion seem more ready to embrace falsehood than truth. But I will still hope in the interposition of Providence to save our country. I have been ever fond of the motto, "Never to despair."

I am most respectfully, Sir, your obedient servant,

TIMOTHY PICKERING.

JAMES MCHENRY TO GEORGE WASHINGTON.

Philadelphia, 10 November, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

My attention, for some time past, has been so completely engrossed, that, notwithstanding my earnest wish to communicate with you upon several subjects, I could not, without neglecting some urgent business, devote any moments to that purpose. In truth, the stone, however near I may seem to get it to the sum-

mit of the mountain, is perpetually upon the recoil, and de constant exertion and labor to keep it from descending.

I have much to say to you; many facts to intrust to bosom. Take them without order and as they occur. Yo arrange them in your own mind, and supply the results.

The prevailing rumor has no doubt reached you, of dis ments in the cabinet, or that a difference of opinion exis tween the President and heads of departments relative t mission to France. I am sorry to inform you, that there much foundation for this report. Last session of Congres President made the nomination of Mr. Murray, to treat wi Republic of France, without any consultation, or giving the intimation of his intention to any of the heads of departi This step, admitting the measure itself to have been wis the dictate of sound policy, was nevertheless such a dep from established practice, as could not fail to excite consid sensibility. Independent, however, of this circumstance, c new practice it seemed intended to establish, the policy an dom of the mission were either doubted or condemned by if not all the Federal members of Congress; in consequen which the nomination received a modification by a second sage to the Senate from the President, in which they conc

Notwithstanding this modification, it was very evident that of the Federal members of both branches of Congress c: home with them a settled dislike to the measure, as ill-t built upon too slight grounds, and therefore humiliating t United States; as calculated to revive French principles, stren the party against government, and produce changes in the ments and conduct of some of the European powers, that i materially affect our interests and growing commercial pros

Have not some of these apprehensions been already realiz

You must have perceived observations and suggestions in newspapers of different States, tending to censure the mis which I consider as having proceeded from these disaffectio

The great and important successes of the allies, engaged ag France, the changes in the Directory, and the rapidity with w every matter and thing in France seemed hurrying to a restor of monarchy, indicated to the heads of departments the prop of a suspension of the mission. We accordingly, while he at Quincy, presented the idea to the President, as a subject his consideration.

Without taking any notice of the subject of this letter, a

days succeeding his arrival at Trenton, he convened us to conclude upon the instructions, and shortly after gave his final orders for the departure of the commissioners, who have accordingly sailed from Rhode Island in the frigate *United States* on the 3d instant.

Shall we have a treaty with France in consequence of this mission? Yes, if she finds it necessary to her situation and circumstances.

Will a treaty, which shall not trench upon any rights acquired by, give umbrage to, England? It is certain no good reason can be assigned why it should.

Is it not also possible, that the policy of the mission may be justified by events, such as a general peace in Europe this winter, the republican form of government remaining to France?

The President believes, and with reason, that three of the heads of departments have viewed the mission as impolitic and unwise. He does not, I imagine, class the Secretary of the Navy among its disapprovers, although he joined in the letter advising its suspension. I find that he is particularly displeased with Mr. Pickering and Mr. Wolcott, thinking they have encouraged opposition to it to the eastward; seemingly a little less so with me, and not at all with Mr. Stoddert and the Attorney-General, who appear to enjoy his confidence; and yet those he is so displeased with are still received and treated by him with apparent cordiality.

Whether he will think it expedient to dismiss any, or how many of us, is a problem. I believe the Attorney-General and Secretary of the Navy are of opinion he ought, and would perhaps, if asked, advise to the dismission at least of one. There are however, powerful personal reasons, especially at this juncture, which forbid it; and it is more than possible, as these chiefly respect the eastern quarter of the Union, they will prevail.

But, in my view of the subject, the evil does not lie in a change of secretaries, however brought about, as these may be replaced with good and able men, but in the mission, which, as far as my information extends, is become an apple of discord to the Federalists, that may so operate upon the ensuing election of President, as to put in jeopardy the fruits of all their past labors, by consigning to men, devoted to French innovations and demoralizing principles, the reins of government. It is this dreaded consequence, which afflicts, and calls for all the wisdom of, the Federalists.

It is evident from the late election in Pennsylvania, that there

is a disciplined and solid army of Anti-federalists ready to take the field for a President of their own principles, and equally perspicuous from the newspapers and movements among this description of men throughout the Union, that the same spirit and intention actuate the whole.

The aim of these men, or their leaders, has been to produce a change in the public opinion, which is to overthrow present power, and perhaps institutions. In this work, they have not been deterred by defeats, and have certainly made considerable progress. They skilfully seize on every circumstance, which can be made to conduce to their object. A word said by a Federalist, against any law or measure of the government, is carefully noted and adroitly used to give a false coloring to the intentions of government. Nothing, in short, escapes them, that can be perverted or malignantly applied to their purpose.

It is among other things to be lamented, that certain recent measures of the administration were of such a nature, as to offer an appearance of favoring individual merchants, which could not without a public injury be openly explained; and that some of the gentlemen of the administration have not, by their conversation on the subject, assisted to remove the suspicions industriously propagated by the opposition. I allude particularly to the mission to Toussaint, to St. Domingo, and the supplies sent in the vessel, which carried thither the agent.

To open with St. Domingo a free trade, to put an effectual stop to privateering from that Island, and to set an example, which might extend to other French possessions, it was necessary to accompany the agent with certain articles, which would prove acceptable to Toussaint in the then situation of his affairs and wants of the Island. The law, which enabled the President to open trade with any part of the French possessions, did not authorize him to procure such means, as appeared to be indispensable, in this case, to give success to the attempt. There was no appropriation for the purpose; and to have taken the means from existing funds, appropriated to distinct objects, would have required a communication to Congress, which would probably have occasioned an investigation into all circumstances of the appropriation. Thus situated, it was determined to permit the owners of the vessel, which was to carry out the agent, to ship the articles wanted by Toussaint at their own risk and account, limiting their profit to such a sum, as would pay them for the expense of the voyage only. This was procuring for Toussaint the articles,

which he most wanted, at a price far below what he could have obtained them for in any other way, while it relieved from the embarrassments, which would have attended any application of the public money for that object.

This measure has been made an instrument of against the administration. It has been accused of granting partial favors, which could not possibly have been extended. There has also been confounded with the measure, to sow disaffection among the merchants, the use which the agent is said to have made of his situation to purchase on his arrival at St. Domingo large quantities of its produce, thereby enhancing the price upon the adventurers when the trade was opened.

How far this allegation may be founded I cannot say, or whether, had any other person than Dr. Stevens been the agent, the same complaint would not have been made. The merchants, I understand, also complain, that the agent is either a merchant, or connected profitably with merchants, which gives a bias to his conduct. If he discovers partiality in executing the duties he is charged with, it is a reason for his removal; but you know, that the practice has been to vest merchants with the consular office. I have learned from the Secretary of State, that Dr. Stevens has the ear and confidence of Toussaint in a very high degree. To retain this is important; but, should he have made an improper use of his situation, it ought not to prevent his being superseded.

Another point on which opposition dwells, with uncommon energy and perseverance, is the charge of British influence. I am informed that Mr. Dallas has in his possession a letter from Mr. Adams to Mr. Tench Coxe, written at the time and on the occasion of the appointment of Mr. Pinckney to London as minister plenipotentiary, in which he ascribes his appointment to British influence, and adds, that, were he of the administration, he should think it proper to watch attentively the course of things, or words to that effect. This letter I also understand is to be produced on the trial of Duane, and his defence rested upon substantiating the charge. It is also said to be intended to call upon you and the President to give information in the case.

When I consider the difference in opinion between his ministers and the President, the effects this has produced on the public mind, and may produce, particularly among Federalists; the different opinions entertained by Federalists relative to the policy and wisdom of the mission; the additional strength, which the calumny of British influence must derive from the letter alluded

to, in the minds of the ignorant, misled, and undiscerning titude; and subjoin to all this the growth of French princ I confess I see more danger to the cause of order and good ernment at this moment, than has at any time heretofore th ened the country.

What ought to be done? Would it produce more har of action among the friends of government, were the Pres to dismiss those ministers he seems most displeased with think not. The Secretary of State I believe to be an up man, who has served the United States faithfully, and to th most of his abilities; and the Secretary of the Treasury a able, prudent, discerning, and honest man, whose place coul be better filled.

Ought the President to conciliate his ministers by a con which does not reduce them, on great occasions, to ciphe the government, and by this means endeavour at least to r mutual confidence and harmony of action? This I should upon to be the wisest experiment. But will he adopt it? the irritation, which his mind suffers from those who flatte or badly advise him, permit his judgment to perceive and p this course? I really know not. I see rocks and quicksan all sides, and the administration in the attitude of a sinking It will, I imagine, depend very much upon the President w she is to weather the storm or go down.

I am, with the most unalterable attachment, my dear Sir yours truly and affectionately,

JAMES McHEN

END OF VOL. XI.